BLACKIE'S BOYS' ANNUAL

E. Allwright,

3, Kerrison Lodge
59 Warwick Road

Eric
With Aunty & Uncle Berts
best wishes for Xmas
1923

BLACKIE'S BOYS' ANNUAL

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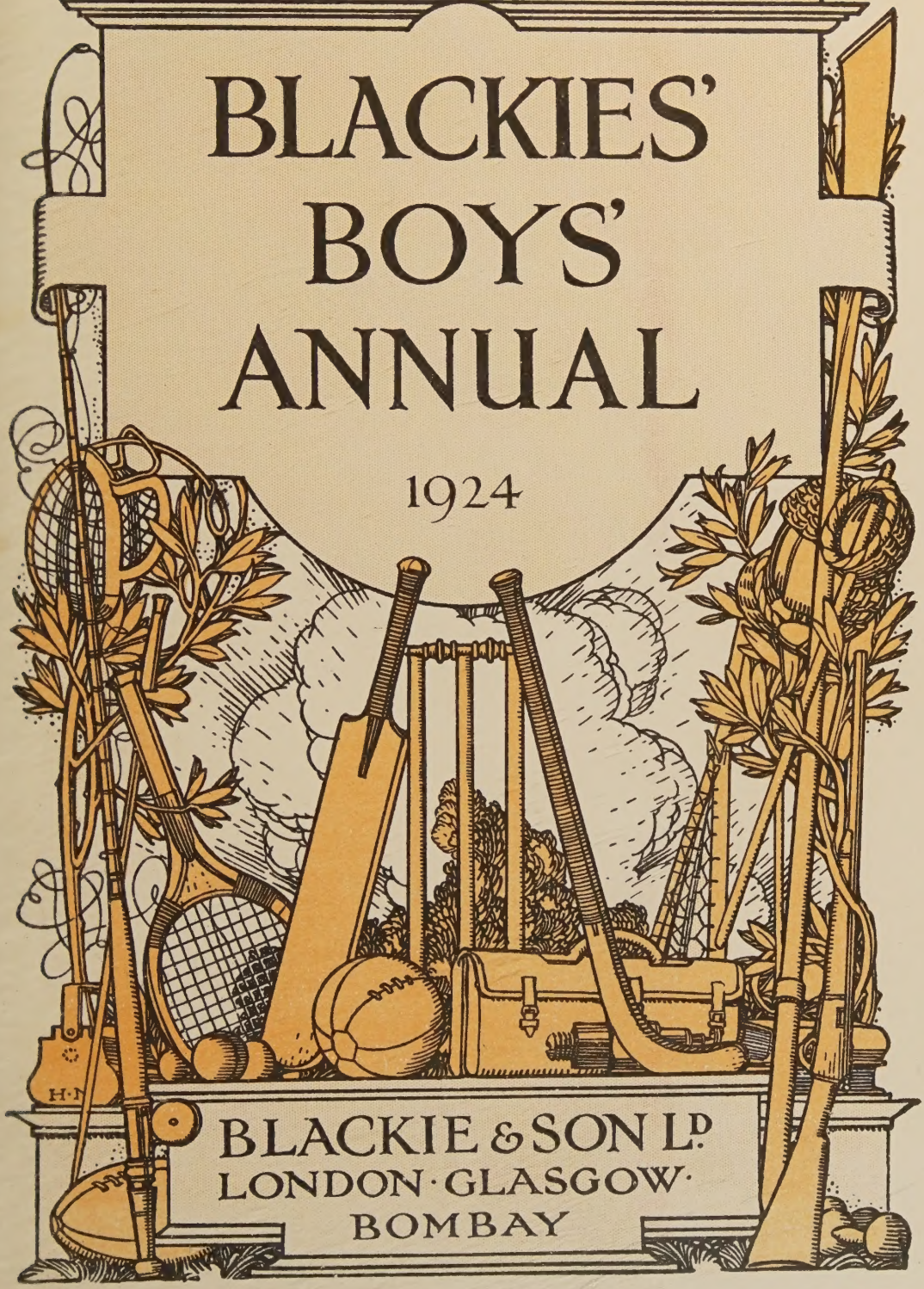
The Broncho-buster

BLACKIES' BOYS' ANNUAL

1924



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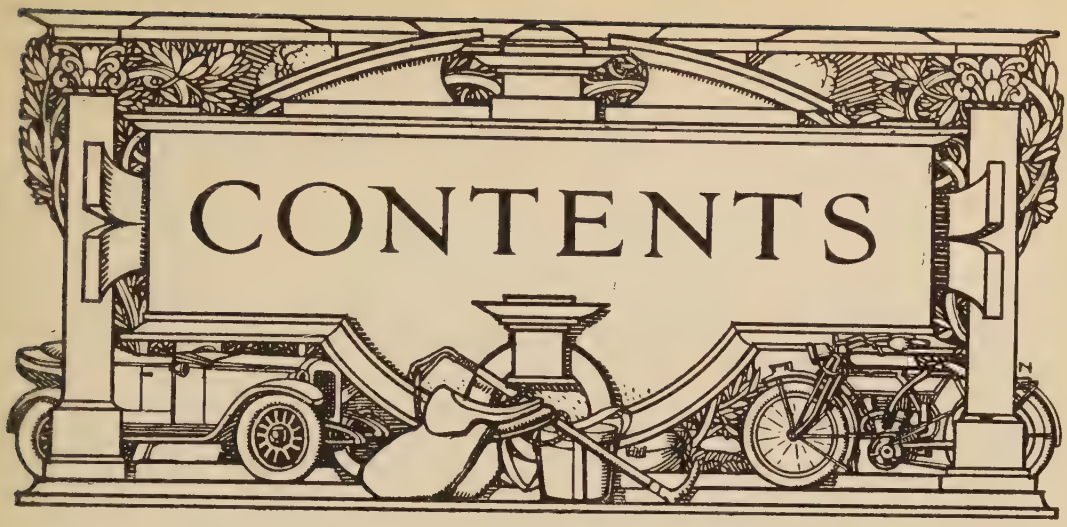

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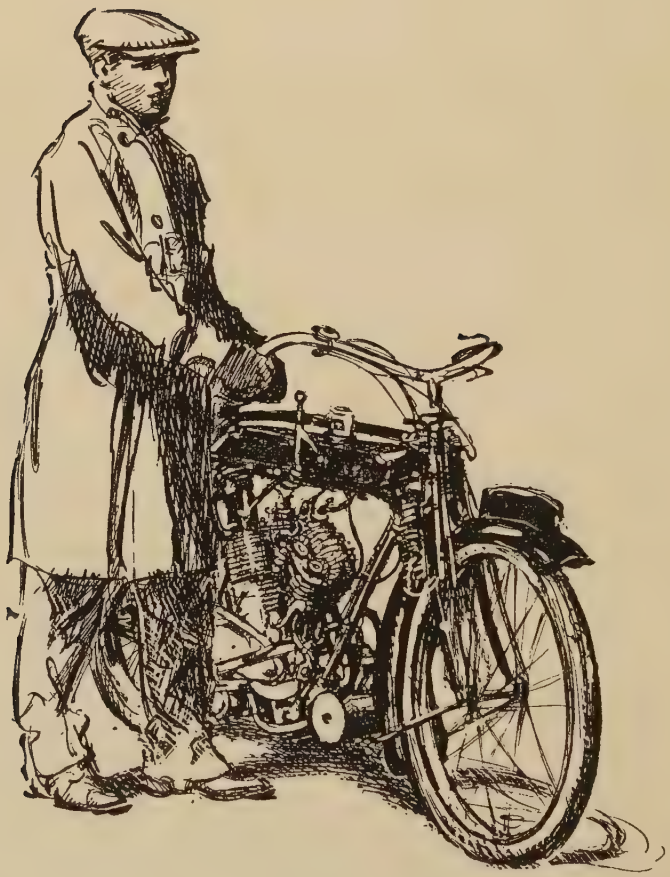

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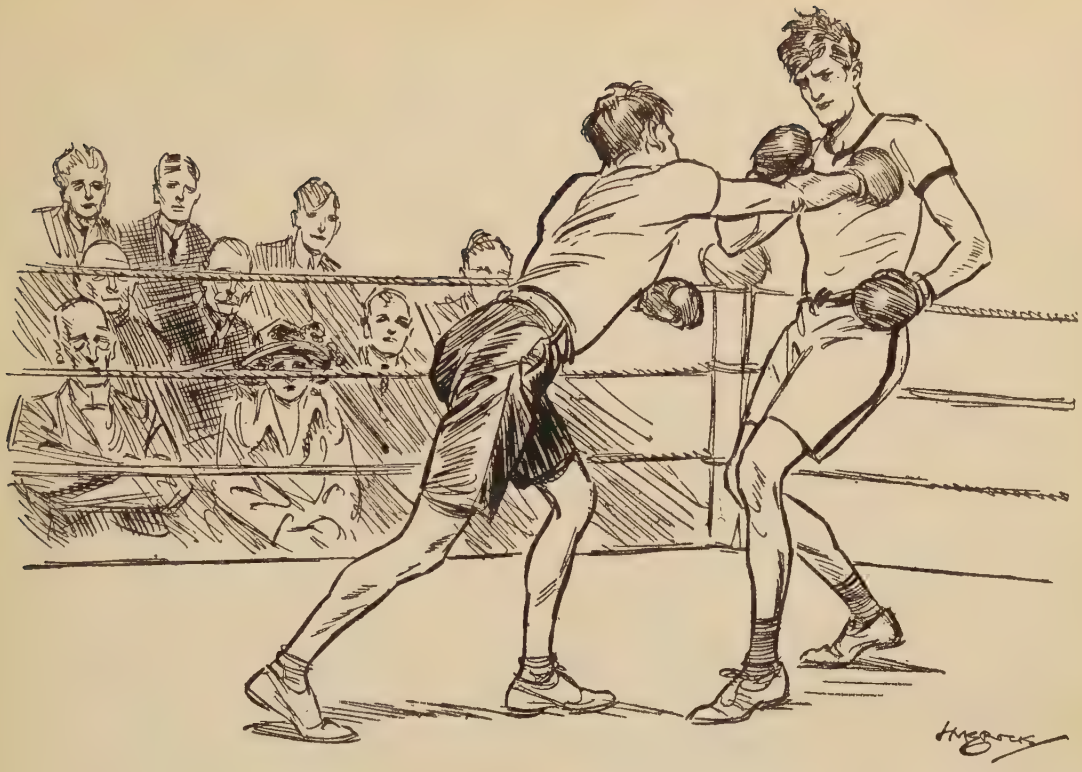


A Famous Name

By Hylton Cleaver

I

In the room that had been the nursery till she and all her brothers had grown out of needing one, a girl sat, with a newspaper before her and a pair of garden shears held in one hand. She was a girl who never sat on chairs if she could find a table, and the reason she was taking out that newspaper cutting with a pair of shears was solely that it seemed to her a rather humorous thing to do. Whilst she worked she whistled. She was a hero-worshipper. This cutting was about her brothers, and it was going to be pasted in a book amongst a lot of others. She held the cutting up before her, thrust the fingers of one hand up through her curls until her head was propped up by an elbow resting on a table, and then she read the paragraph again.

"True," she commented, in the small voice of one speaking to herself. "Oh, true indeed. The Courtenays are a most unusual family. I'm one."

She pursed her lips, read steadily on to the end, and then at last sighed and sat back, as might one who has made a heavy meal.

"Yes, that's good stuff."

"The brothers Courtenay," that paragraph declared, "have lit a beacon that will not die out. No Courtenay has ever failed to win his colours yet at any sport that he has taken up. The elder brothers, who have left Greyminster, were each in turn Captain of the School, and of cricket and football; both have since earned their Blues, whilst one has played for England at both games. In the case of A. O. and D. G., who are still at the school, the former is already captain of football and captain-elect of cricket, and the latter is a member of the school side at five sports. The name of Courtenay has therefore an enviable predominance upon the scroll of honour at the school, but there will be also a gilded page kept for a record of their deeds on other fields of play when England's 'History of Sportsmen' is compiled, for what the Fosters were to Malvern, the great line of Courtenays will be to Greyminster."

The writer of those notes warmed to his theme as he went on, till it appeared to the imaginative girl, who read his printed words, that he must really be declaiming passionately from a stage, whipping an audience of fervent sportsmen by his gestures into a mood of perfectly fanatical enthusiasm, so that, when he at last brought on the members of that family in order of their seniority to make their bow, the whole assembly would rise and prostrate themselves.

"Ha!" said she, and reached joyously towards her pot of paste. "They don't know there's another still to come. When they've said all they can about the lot of them, they'll have to start all over again and say the same about young Ronald, and then p'r'aps they'll put in a photo of me and say, 'Behold his sister', as they do when somebody gets burgled or found drowned."

She pasted in that cutting hopefully, and then let it dry, whilst she sat back with folded arms.

As she did so the handle of the door was turned, and a slow footfall sounded on the threshold of the room.

The girl looked round. Her youngest brother stood there in the doorway, a queer expression on his face; he was fourteen, and was in riding-breeches and soft gaiters streaked with mud; one hand was in his pocket, one still resting on the door-knob.

His sister lifted up a hand, and now she smacked it down upon that pasted cutting.

"There, my boy! You don't know what that says; but one day they'll write things like that about you, and when they've written all they can, I half believe they'll pitch on me and say that I'm a wonder. I shall be disappointed if they don't."

Ronald made no reply; his eyes were staring into vacancy; his lower lip was twisted sideways and held by his teeth. She suddenly saw he was in distress. He felt her eyes searching his, and he contrived to find his voice, but it did not sound half so level as he hoped.

"Is that about Greyminster?"

"Yes," she answered slowly and uncertainly. "Why—what's the matter?"

"I," he answered, "I'm not going."

The girl slipped from her seat and came towards him. She was his twin. Her brows were puckered; her head was thrust forward.

"You're not what? Not *going*? Why, whatever do you mean?"

He answered: "I'm a coward. They've been holding family council and that's the result. I came down at a fence this morning, and they say I never *meant* my horse to jump it. P. J. says that any horse will jump if you make up your mind it shall."

There was a moment's silence, and then

at last the girl appeared to comprehend.

"Have they been at you again?"

He nodded wretchedly.

"And now, does Daddy say he won't send you to Greyminster?"

It seemed incredible. He was the youngest brother, true enough, but then he was her twin; no matter what the others had achieved, he was her favourite; it was to him she looked to do the biggest things of all.

"They say I should let down the family. They're going to send me somewhere where I shan't be noticed."

"Then," said the girl at last, "I'll just go downstairs and find father."

"That's no use. He's made up his mind now."

"And," said his sister, "so have I."

. . . . . .

The father of the Courtenays sat in the long, oak-panelled dining-room, with the long, thin legs of a hunting man stretched out before him. In every line of him there was something significant of one of England's country gentlemen, and when one came to analyse the lean, well-chiselled countenance itself, the proud shape of the mouth, high forehead, straight nose, steely eyes, one saw also a pride of ancestry.

His only daughter closed the door behind her, and then came across. She was more than his only daughter; she was the living counterpart of her dead mother, and a rare possession. She reached his side and rested her hand on his knee, and then she tilted up her chin and looked at him.

"Daddy, have you said Ronald shan't go to Greyminster?"

Her voice was almost threatening. He stayed looking at her sternly, and then at

"I don't understand"

last his lips grew tighter and he seemed to stiffen as though pride were stirring, and then last of all he curtly nodded.

"Oh, Daddy, why?"

"Look round these walls," said he.

She slowly turned her head, then one by one she looked upon the big oil-paintings of the Courtenays of other days. Some had been soldiers, but each and every one had the same cast of countenance, the same proud look, wide eyes, and noble carriage; there were stories to be told of each, soldier or civilian, and of the brave way that he had upheld the family name.

But the girl had seen all those portraits long ago; she knew them all by heart; they gave no explanation.

"I don't understand."

He turned, a rigid disciplinarian, and looked at her.

"Margaret," said he, "your brothers have all been to Greyminster; they have built up a name that stands alone amongst the present generation; they are known for their fearlessness; they will be remembered there as long as we may live, and Ronald is the last. I have been proud of all of them, but I'm not proud of Ronald, and, if I sent him to Greyminster, they would remember us there not by all that your other brothers did so much as by the fact that the last of the family proved that we could not keep it up. Your brothers are like all the Courtenays; they're proud; their name is a school boast, and if one of them is a coward, then it is our shame. But we need not flaunt our shame at Greyminster."

Margaret was staring at him in royal indignation.

"None of you understands him," she said angrily; "that's why you all say that. He's *not* a coward; and if you had let him go his own way, he'd have got the better of his nerves, oh, long ago; but they've all bullied him year after year, and now they've got him frightened. When he was going to learn to swim, instead of giving him time to get used to it, they chucked him into the pond and let him nearly drown before they got him out, and always after that he hated swimming."

"But," said her father evenly, "all of the others learned that way."

"I know, I know!" cried Margaret. "But he's different. He needed coaxing and encouragement, and he's never had it. They've never known what fear is; it's been easy for them to be brave, but a hero's the man who controls his fear, not the man who doesn't feel it; it's been ten times harder for him to do all the things they do than it was for the others, but he'd have done them in the end if they'd been patient. He's not a coward; every time he does a hard thing he's got to get the better of himself first, and they never give him time. When they want him to go off the highest diving-board, they take him up and they don't give him time to think; they all stand round and say: 'Go on—go on, what are you waiting for?' And he knows that they'll push him if he doesn't go, and so he flops in all excitement and lands flat and hurts himself. He hates it! Who can wonder? It's their fault! He's never had a chance to find his feet; they've always badgered him. He's not *like* them; he's like me."

Her father stood up quickly and threw out his hands.

"Are *you* a coward, Margaret?"

"No," she answered, "but I've got imagination, and I *would* be frightened if it wasn't that I always see the funny side of everything. It's that that saves *me*. If he's going to jump his horse, it may be that he's wondering if he'll fall and whether he'll get hurt. Well, when I'm going to jump, *I* wonder if *I'll* fall, but all I think

is how ridiculous I should look if I did. The others don't wonder at all. It's easy for them to be daring; and whether Ronald thinks he'll fall or not, he *jumps*, and that's not cowardly."

Her father looked upon her in a grim paternal way, as though all she had said had no connection with the case at all.

"My dear," said he, "I have made up my mind."

Margaret looked at him in challenge.

"You're going to shame him, Daddy?"

"In preference," he said, "to his disgracing us."

Margaret did not move. This was a house of men-folk; big, hard-riding, fearless men, deep voices, masculine conceit. She seemed alone in it.

She suddenly flung round upon her heel, and then went bitterly out of the room. He heard her go pounding up the stairs. She rushed into the nursery, reached the table, found her book of cuttings, and then, without another thought, she wrenched the leaves out of the cover, tore them into pieces, and threw them on the fire.

Then she faced her brother.

"I'm going to start a new book," she proclaimed excitedly. "It's only going to be for you, and I want you to fill it."

II

And so the youngest of the Courtenays started on his lonely way. Sooner or later in life all of us have to put up with being dropped out of a side in which we think we have a right to be, but it is different to be dropped by one's own family right at the start of life.

Here was a young man who belonged to the Courtenays just as another might be a member of the Harlequins; he had looked forward all this while to playing for them, and now that his turn had come at last he had just been left out. He was dispatched to Rainhurst, humiliated and dispirited, and he entered that school gravely and unrecognized. People had heard about the Courtenays, but they did not think Ronald was in any way connected with them, otherwise, of course, he would have been at Greyminster, and Ronald never mentioned any brothers, though once when he was questioned by one curious youth he answered slowly: "Oh, *those* Courtenays. Yes, I think they are some distant relatives. I'm not sure what."

He was not naturally sarcastic either.

And so, like any other new boy, he looked round about him and began to settle down. He had the good looks of his family, but in his own case, finely drawn. He had a curious way of walking, too, with eyes upon the ground, yet looking up at people from under contracted brows without raising his head. It was not a shifty look, nor was it sheepish; it was an air of thoughtful concentration on something he thought you would not understand. He played Rugger with the same air. He used to keep waiting for a pass in that way, for, though he was very fast, he was unsafe with his hands. That was pure nervousness. When his line was in action, he would race along the wing with his hands getting ready, looking all the time to see how far the ball had got, and wondering, not whether he would be severely tackled, but whether he would drop the pass. One takes a pass, really, mechanically; one's mind should be concentrated on what one will do with the ball when it has come to hand; one should be in one's stride, and, if the pass is reasonably given, take it almost without looking. But Ronald Courtenay did not play like that. Time was when he had done so, and he would have developed on those lines had he been taught aright. Instead, he had been badgered. In all the practice games

at home he had known that he was easily the least effective player. All his brothers could make rings round him; they bore him down by weight, and wriggled free from tackles by their strength; they were much faster, more experienced than he; they could kick better. And at the end of each game they would say: "There, that'll do you good". What nonsense!

To know, even before he had begun to do a thing, that all his brothers would begin to shout that he was wrong, had made him afraid to act. He had grown like a nervous horse in the hands of a stupid driver, never knowing what he was required to do, but always half expecting punishment in any case, and hesitating therefore till the very end, but, when eventually acting, doing it blindly and in a tearing hurry to avoid the whip.

In the new atmosphere of Rainhurst, although it seemed at first a life lived in a corner with face to the wall, he found that he was much more left alone. Term after term passed, and by degrees his nerves began to settle down. He found life rather less alarming at school than he had imagined. He had no reputation to live up to here; instead of being last of a line, walking in the footsteps of a Great Example, he had become the first of a new line, breaking new ground, a pioneer, and he was taken as they found him, not by the valuation of his brothers, but at his own worth. Margaret was well satisfied. It was as she had always said it would be. But this was only the beginning.

"Very well," she said cheerfully one holiday. "That book's still waiting, and there's one especial thing I want you to make up your mind to do. You'll have to set your mind on it, and live for it, and then at last you'll *do* it."

And so she told him what it was. He looked at her in alarm, but gradually apprehension died away and left him calm and resolute.

"All right," said he.

His brothers took but little interest in him. They were only aware that he was not yet looming in the public eye, and that the general public of Greyminster did not know that they had another brother; that was all they asked. He was the skeleton in the cupboard of their house of pride, but whilst they went their way, he too went his, and he began to work now for a definite end. There was new help now in the world in which he found himself. All his life he had been brought up in a house wherein a pride of family was all that mattered. He knew now that this was all wrong. What counted most was pride of school. He began to love Rainhurst, and to feel himself a part of it. That was the lesson that he learned. One had to do great things, not for oneself or for one's family, but for one's school, one's regiment, one's country.

Ronald was seventeen, and the only brother still at Greyminster was in his last term there, the lord, in most respects, of all that he surveyed. He was not Captain of Boxing though he had boxing colours, but the young man who, in view of D. G. Courtenay's many offices, himself skippered the boxing club, thought it well to consult with him.

"Now that they're not going to hold the boxing championships any more," said he, "the great thing seems to be to have team-matches; just one school against another, on a Saturday, like football. Well, we've fixed up two. And here's a letter from the Rainhurst people." He drew it from an envelope and held it out. "They suggest a match with us, and they seem willing to come here and have it, so I think we might fix it up; don't you?"

D. G. gave it one moment's thought. He had a lot to do; his air was that of a

He leaned back and stared at it

Prime Minister hurrying to the "House". He was Courtenay, a man whose words were weighted with historical influence. He said:

"Rainhurst? Oh, I suppose so. . . . Yes." Then hastened off, holding a sheaf of papers in one hand and thinking hard of something else. And only when a letter came to him a little later in that week did he really sit up for the first time and take due notice, for the letter came from Margaret, and it said: "Ronald's been waiting two years for this chance. He's going to box for Rainhurst."

Alone, D. G. sat in his study that night, and read the letter through a second time. Then he leaned back and stared at it. It was, of course, absurd. Ronald would never make a boxer. Margaret had always been upon his side. It was obvious, not that he was going to do wonders, but that he had at last got colours for the school Probably the Rainhurst boxing team was weak, and boxing colours were the easiest to get. Only last holidays D. G. had though that Ronald seemed the same as ever; that could scarcely have been play-acting. No, this meant only one thing, that the Rainhurst team were coming here, and that by some chance Ronald had contrived to make himself a member of it. And so Greyminster would find out. That was all he could make of it. They would compare the names, the family looks, and they would know now, at the very end, that there had been another Courtenay all the time, and

that he had not come to Greyminster. Why not? They would need only to look on and they would see. Ronald would go into the ring. He would stand up just long enough to save his face, and then would quit. Before the whole of Greyminster, a Courtenay would, for all their efforts at concealment, show his yellow streak.

D. G. was pig-headed; he saw no point of view but his own, and his own was, in this case, that of the family. It was impossible to scratch the fixture now; even if he could have persuaded the captain of boxing to abandon it, he could offer no reason. It must go on. There was no way in which he could stop Ronald now; the youngest of the Courtenays was going to have revenge; he was coming to show up the family.

Day after day D. G. devoted all his spare time to the problem. He thought all round it; he rummaged in the recesses of his mind for some way out, but he could find none, and he wrote then to his brothers and sought their advice. Meanwhile he wrote to Ronald too, and asked: "What weight are you going to fight at?"

The dour answer came:

"What weight are *you*?"

D. G. could not believe it. That Ronald would come he had accepted as a sorry fact, but that there was a menace in his coming other than disgrace, that he was issuing a challenge, had never come into his mind, and now that he could see it he looked upon the whole affair in a new light. It was as though behind that written message stood a shadowy form saying, with pointing finger raised: "It's *you* I'm after. You're the man I want. What weight are *you*?"

D. G. stared at that missive for a long, long time, and then at last he took pen up deliberately and replied: "I shall be fighting middle". And without delay the answer came: "Then so shall I".

Ronald was three pounds over welter; it was a case of getting weight off or putting weight on, and now he had made up his mind.

"He's going to fight *me*," D. G. said, when P. J., eldest of the brothers, came down on a motor-bike to see him. "ME!"

He seemed outraged.

"Well, it should be amusing," said the other. "Like caning a kid across a chair."

"Yes, *yes*," said D. G., "but, don't you see, the whole of Greyminster will be looking on; they'll hear the name, and know he's one of us. If I give him a hiding, they'll see why it was he never came here, and they'll see a Courtenay *quit*."

"Quit?" said the other, slowly coming to a point of view he had not seen before. "D'you think——"

His eyes were studiously thoughtful. Then at last he sat down.

And so they held a council, and at the end they formed a resolution.

"It's for the sake of our name," P. J. insisted. "Make sure he sees that."

And D. G. did.

He wrote to Ronald, and he said:

"Since you'll fight me, and both of us are Courtenays, I want the fellows here not to suspect the truth about you being at Rainhurst, and so I'm going to go light with you till the last minute. You need not be afraid. I'll have to win, of course, but I don't want the school to see you make a rotten show, so you can set about me, and I'll take it till the very end, and then just do enough to win."

This time an answer came that he could not misunderstand.

"You seem to have a wrong impression," Ronald wrote. "I'm not concerned about your pride. I've never been included in it. I'm not coming to Greyminster to lose, at all. What I am coming to do is to give you a hiding."

And D. G. stood, hand raised to chin, and stared down at that letter strangely and incredulously. Next, for the first time in his life, he suddenly began to think on new lines. He, and not Ronald, was the last of the Greyminster Courtenays, and this was his last term. They had feared that the Courtenays would be remembered chiefly by the memory of the last of the line; very well, then, they would be remembered now, by him.

Supposing Ronald had been training for this day for two long years? Supposing he had got the better of himself, and was a funk no longer?

It gradually began to worry him; it seemed the burden of responsibility had been thrust upon him by a house of pride, and that he had never realized as much till now. He had always done all that he had to do, and done it well, because the instinct was hereditary, but he had never really seen till now that the post for which Ronald had been deemed unworthy had been filled by *him*. *He* was the last. And, as he stayed there with head bowed in thought, he could behold for the first time, at this, the height of his career at school, when he was everything that mattered, and his name a boast, the dim possibility of being beaten.

For seven days that shadowy anxiety seemed to be always with him, and then, quite suddenly, his crass self-confidence snapped, and he knew that for once in his life he, D. G., had been assailed by nerves. He did not fear a gruelling; it was not stage-fright; it was that he had too much fame upon his shoulders; had gained too much honour, and that there was, therefore, too much at stake. He would stand, on the day that the fight came, for the Courtenays, the last of them, in his last term, and he could not help picturing how he would feel if the farewell of the Courtenays to Greyminster should be defeat.

Heavier, heavier yet it weighed upon him. He was up against something he could not touch, or see. It was the "needle". He began to write letters that, had he known it, were a sign. And the more he repressed his feelings the harder they grew to bear with calm. To each brother he wrote; he asked one if he could get down to Rainhurst and find out just how good Ronald really was. He asked another to come down to Greyminster and help him train for his last and his greatest fight; the third he merely asked for counsel.

"You were the best of us at boxing," he explained. "How had I better fight him? Shall I just try to tire him out, or shall I start on him right from the commencement? Do you suppose he'll rush me?"

And the brother who received and read that letter could not think that he read aright; it was the letter of a man who sees the writing on the wall. It started a new line of thought in his mind too, just as the letter Ronald sent had started one in the mind of D. G. Why did D. G. suddenly fear defeat like this? Each brother answered, but all their letters voiced conflicting views; on each the influence of D. G.'s letter had had much the same effect; he could imagine them all sitting up and looking curiously alarmed, and D. G. was left there at last, holding those answers in his hand and looking blankly at each of them in turn. It was as though an earthquake had come and had shaken that house of pride to its foundations. And he, D. G., the youngest, most bombastic when they had banned Ronald, was standing out alone now, and by him that house of pride would stand or fall.

III

Some day all waiting ends.

D. G.'s had almost ended now. He was in the Greyminster ring, gloved, ready, and

he sat back in his corner, looking across to where young Ronald sat.

They were two thoroughbreds.

They looked it. Ronald was the finer-drawn; he was the lighter, and he was obviously the younger too. He was pale, bright of eye. But he had cured himself of the old habit of continually fidgeting. He gave nothing away; he sat there motionless, a sphinx. D. G. knew nothing more about him now than he had known before. He was the unknown quantity. The fellow was his brother certainly, and yet a brother he had never understood. He tried to breed new confidence by repetition of the old belief. "Oh, he's a coward! Why, he'd funk a fence! He'll funk this too. You won't be beaten; don't you worry."

It was not good enough. He did worry. His nerves were stretched to breaking point. He heard their names announced, thought he could sense sensation at the coupling of two Courtenays, then heard the call of "seconds out". He rose. At last came "time!" Their gloved hands met; they parted; battle was joined at last.

D. G. did not know even then what he expected; he had been making plans in his imagination all the week and had kept to none; now he was like an undecided batsman facing googlies. He was going to let Ronald lead the way. He must find what he had to face.

He stood away intently, raised on his toes, his gloved hands moving quickly here and there in readiness for anything, and then he suddenly went in; next instant a remarkably straight left, stiff as a rod, weighted with power, thudded with deadly accuracy into his face and sent him stumbling back. He staggered and recovered in a moment, but in all that came after of that never-to-be-forgotten fight that one blow left its own effect; through all the three dour rounds he never could forget the shock, the instantaneous collision of that startling blow. He had waited to see what Ronald was likely to do, and that was it; the blow had drawn blood, not much, but enough to notice; he strove to pretend he had not felt it, but he could get no rest to help him to believe it. He slipped this way and that on light feet, working for an opening of his own, but all the time Ronald was circling resolutely round him with a close defence and a left that went in and out like lightning It was all true; unknown to his brothers, he had found the hereditary strain of genius, and he had put it into boxing to their undoing. Ronald had conquered fear; this was the day of judgment of his cowardice, and he was going to make no mistake. His style suited his build. He boxed in the peculiarly classic English way; there was no crouch; he bore himself with a calm deadly confidence; he seemed to know exactly what he meant to do the whole way through that round; he was never upset; by little movements of his head he slipped D. G.'s onslaughts, and then drew back to hook as D. G. darted in. His lips were tight-closed; his eyes never flinched, and as those three long minutes ticked away D. G. found out the truth. It did not stop him; each time he was outwitted it seemed to rouse new spirit in him; he, too, could box; this youngster was a coward; he had always been a coward; he could recall how they had always laughed at him; he must be a coward now. He, D. G., had only to land a few good thumps and Ronald would immediately wilt; he fought to that one end; there was a hint of desperate superciliousness at his lips; his eyes were narrowing a little as though to show young Ronald he had summed him up. Young Ronald took no notice; he boxed on in the same judicious way; he made no effort to show off; he just went out to win. The first round ended

in a rally. D. G. was hunting Ronald round the ring, and Ronald was cleverly standing off and putting in quick footwork and continual counters. The bell seemed to surprise two busy men. They stopped, stayed for a moment as though wanting to go on, then turned and went briskly to their corners, and as he went D. G. looked up as though to catch his brothers' eyes and gather what they thought of it. In a quick glance he saw them motionless; he saw his father too, sitting with folded arms, and Margaret, with a touch of extra colour in her cheeks, her eyes bright with excitement. D. G. sat down. He heard the whispered words his second had to offer, nodded curtly, suffered ministration, but he did not look across at Ronald.

Time came again. This time he tried to tempt Ronald to come at him, but Ronald saw as much, and so kept moving round him, shooting in quick stabs with his hard left from every angle, and keeping nicely out of harm; and when D. G. took to rushing again, he kept his left still jumping out to meet him, and if that missed, his right came across with lightning suddenness and hooked as he stepped back. Just for a minute that went on, and then by slow degrees D. G. seemed to find a way round that young man's defence. He had tried this; he had tried that, and had been beaten off; but there are ways to get round any defence invented. Sometimes we do not find it out in time; on other days we strike it early in the fight. D. G. dropped all his eager tactics, and he started to box Ronald as Ronald was boxing him.

He began thumping with his left, as straight and suddenly as he had found Ronald do. He banged it through that young brother's defence at last, a clean punch, and the jolt in his glove, the stab up his forearm told him that it had landed properly; he saw Ronald step back, move quickly as though to avoid another, and then he saw blood.

Instantly he went in; he hammered now with that left unmercifully. Oh, he had found the way at last; his reach was longer, and whilst they both fought in that way, so long as he timed his blows by his brother's, he would get the lead; the extra length of arm would do it. They went round the ring exchanging lefts then, blow for blow; each had drawn blood now, but young Ronald seemed to show it more; he fought back valiantly, but D. G. was right. When two men box each other in the same style, he with the longer reach, other things being equal, will be sure to triumph. Ronald tried to get close; he feinted, side-stepped, darted in. D. G. was just in time; his right shot up from under in a slashing uppercut, and Ronald's head was jolted back.

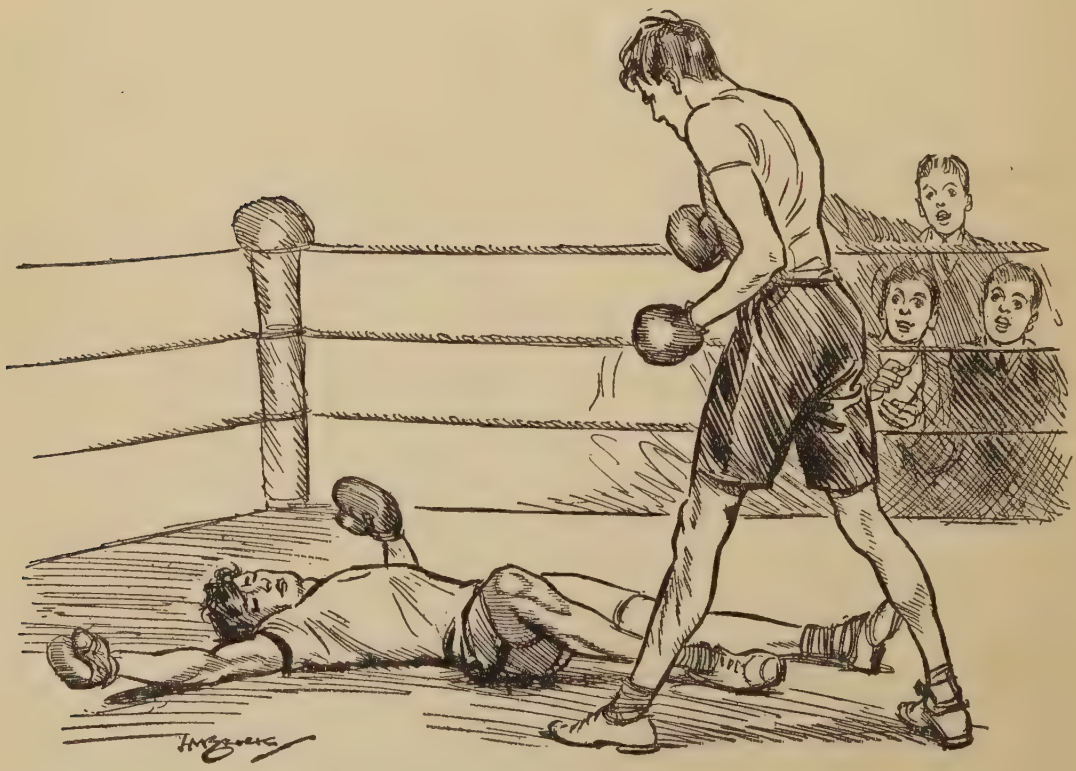
D. G. held him now with his eyes. Round the ring he followed Ronald; his left, strong, straight, implacable, kept landing, and Ronald's face was badly marked. His wind was still good, and he stood up to it nobly, but punishment was telling; his lips were broken, and he could tell the bitter taste of blood; his nose was puffing up; each fresh blow landing on it made him wince with sharp pain; he tried to use a closer guard, but a wound in boxing, like a sprained finger to a fellow dressing, seems to get in the way of everything. The more he strove to protect himself the less care he was devoting to attack. He had hurt D. G., but he had not hurt him enough.

The second round was ending; he began to speed up; he must not get behind on points; this was where D. G. would expect to make him wilt; that was the great mistake the Courtenays had always made; they had thought that he was afraid of being hurt; he never had been; his trial had come before the fight, just as it had used to come before he took a pass rather than after he

had got the ball. Now that he was at work and in the ring his nerves were under full control. He went in grimly now to end the round in triumph; it made no matter what he got from D. G. in return; he must attack and keep attacking. His left was failing him. Very well, then, he must bring in his right; he started hooking with it and he landed; he took to crouching just a little and then darting in, well covered, and hitting only when he was inside that telling length of reach. D. G. was answering. They stood up toe to toe and slammed out fiercely, each making the greatest effort of the fight to get the upper hand, valiantly intent, and panting. The thud of blows landing all the time roused the people in those massed seats to excited cheers; and the round ended with those two slamming out in mid-ring, level pegging all the time, whilst the applause swelled to spontaneous thunder as time came.

The brothers Courtenay stopped as before, looked at each other fiercely, turned and went to their seats; they never smiled; this time D. G. did not even look around; they both lay back under respite, suffering the padding of damp sponges round their wounds, the flapping of the towels.

D. G. had made up now all that Ronald had won in the first round. He was getting back his confidence; it was a dour fight, certainly, but so far he had held his own, and Ronald once again was being made to wait; to him the interval between the rounds was worse than actual fighting; he hated to



It was all D. G. needed

stay still; but no one knew it; he had control of every muscle; he looked grimly intent, unvanquished.

The minute went by.

They heard for the last time the call: 'seconds out!" Both rose; the seconds gave each to their man a last pat with the towel; then it was "last round! . . . "Time!"

Their hands met once again, and then, all in a moment final battle had begun. Ronald had gone in, well defended, and he was hitting out with either hand; he had discarded, now, that clean upstanding style for good; he had been bested at it; and the man who is losing in a fight and will not change his style deserves to lose. Time after time that deadly left came out and banged against his cut lips; but it could not hold him back; he did not care how fast blood came; he was fit and he could keep on; he was not nervous any more; he was afire with resolution; his right kept plunking in; his head kept circling to avoid that left hand, and in a moment when D. G. was off his guard a second Ronald banged home his own left, with fine effect. D. G. kept tossing his head as though to stay the bleeding from his nose, and came in again, but Ronald never flinched. He was getting back the upper hand. Weight, height, age, and experience were all against him, but not superior courage. Margaret was there, and Margaret had believed in him. He would not fail after those two long years of waiting. He could see D. G. weakening. D. G. could see the shadow of defeat at last. He could hear tumult from the crowded seats, but he could not tell what it meant; it was bad manners, anyhow, to cheer like that during a round, and yet perhaps it was forgivable; they did not see two Courtenays in action every day. Greyminster could not believe their tin god would go down, and D. G. guessed it, and he tried to keep his feet; his gloves were tight shut and his teeth were clenched; his breath was coming in gusts, but he still saw his target, and, though his blows grew slower in their sequence, he still hammered at it. Ronald was answering with two blows for every one that he received; he did not know how long there was to go, but he was not going to take a chance; he must cram every atom of remaining strength into the coming minute. He was a sight to see, red-smeared on face and vest; judging each blow that came at him and judging just as accurately each blow he sent back; the thudding of them never stopped. This was no longer boxing; it was a fight, and D. G., like a Horatius keeping the Courtenay bridge, took no count of his gruelling; there was no time to spare for respite; he must keep up that everlasting onslaught. Ronald was looking up from under puffy brows, and he could see that D. G., for all his will, was giving out; he drove on full of fervour. The tumult from all round the ring swelled up to greet him; nothing could stop that cheering now; people were out of hand; half were up on their feet; Margaret had one hand lifted to each cheek; the father of the Courtenays never moved; the brothers moved this way and that for better view, but never spoke. Ronald was winning now, hands down; D. G. had gone to pieces; he still kept on his feet mechanically, but he had no guard at all; he rocked there, taking all Ronald could give him and inviting more; he was getting the hiding of his life. Ronald took no especial joy in it. D. G. began to fall, and Ronald saw him stagger back on to the ropes, then struggle once again upright. For one sharp second Ronald had a tender moment; there was no great delight in vanquishing a Courtenay, but after all, although a Courtenay had lost, another Courtenay had won. He watched his man,

with both gloved hands in readiness to end it, and still hesitated. Must he put this man down now, for good? Had he not won? But there came recollection of a boxing truth; no fight is ever won on points until the judges give decision, but a knock-out makes certain. He had been called a coward; this was the only chance that he would ever have; D. G. might even say that he had gone light through the rounds as first suggested, and he must not be left to say he had only miscalculated points. Perhaps even that might not have decided Ronald altogether had he not heard again that tumult rising from all sides and swelling round him; it told him this, that D G. had not fought for Greyminster; he had fought for himself, and family pride. He, Ronald, had stood there for Rainhurst, where he had found sanctuary.

He moved, determinedly, judged his time, and then hit out; the blow landed with a crack; it was all D. G. needed. He went clean over backwards, and lay moving spasmodically, but unconscious, on the boards.

. . . . . .

Ronald had walked wearily into the other corner, and now he held his hand out. D. G. rose uncertainly, took it perfunctorily, glanced at him once with punished eyes. The nightmare had come true. Then he turned round without a word and climbed out of the ring; he went with an unsteady gait down the gangway, greeted with uproar of applause for all that he had lost; he never looked at anyone; he never spoke a word. He had not even a congratulation to bestow on Ronald. It was the end, and there was nothing now to say.

Ronald stood for a moment looking after him as though uncertain what to do, and then he also quietly got down from the ring. His second had an arm about his shoulders and a grin upon his face that shone like lamplight, and Ronald went out through a sea of standing figures, all beating the air with programmes and extending hands in desperate attempts to reach his side. He passed on with a weary, blood-stained smile. He had done that which he had promised he would do. Rainhurst had fought the Courtenays and had beaten them.

. . . . . .

The father looked down on his youngest son.

Margaret was beside him, with a hand through his arm and one outstretched to rest on Ronald's arm.

The father spoke:

" There's only one more thing to say, my boy. . . . I think I should like you to just forget all that was said, and go to Greyminster next term, when D. G. goes—so that they will remember all the Courtenays by you."

Ronald looked away. There was a moment's silence. At last he turned back to his father.

" I don't think that would be quite fair," said he. " Rainhurst's my school. I'll stay there, please. . . . I rather feel I might perhaps do something pretty decent there before I go—and then, you never know, I might eventually have a son, and I could feel I'd started a new line. I feel I want to do something like that—for Rainhurst."

Margaret was fingering her chin.

" If that's the case," said she, " perhaps I'd better get another book."

Hairbreadth Parachute Escapes

By Major T. Orde Lees, A.F.C., O.B.E.

It is only natural that parachuting, with its long history, should have provided its quota of thrills. It is, however, striking to find that the number of deaths actually due to parachuting is extraordinarily small.

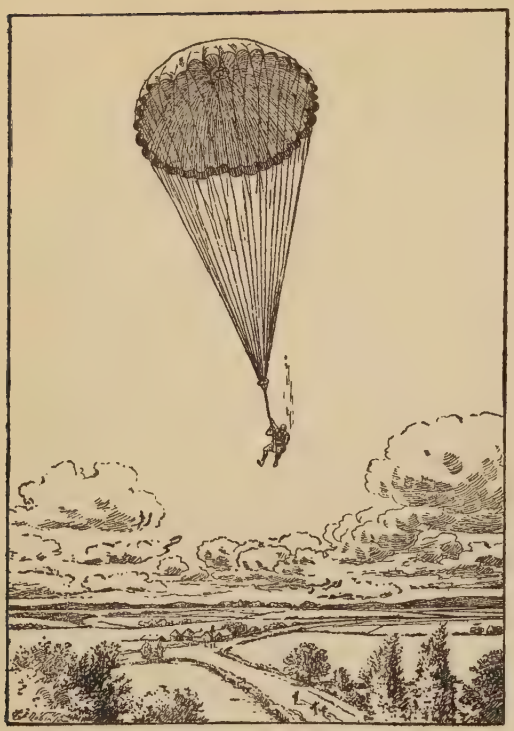
In proportion to the number of descents made, the people killed by parachutes are much fewer than those killed in balloon accidents, and far less than the deaths due to aeroplaning. This is not so singular as it seems at first sight, for the failure of a parachute to open is an exceedingly rare occurrence.

During the war parachutes were used all the time in connection with observation kite-balloons. Out of the eight hundred British balloon observers who jumped in parachutes there were not more than three whose parachutes failed to open. About the same average has been noted by the French, Italians, Belgians, and also by the Germans.

The parachute which was thus used throughout the war, and which saved so many lives, was, moreover, a very crude type, or rather, it was packed in its container in a very rough and ready way. It was simply rolled up, more or less anyhow, with the strings bundled into the case after the silk. It was no uncommon thing for these parachutes to come out of their cases with these rigging-cords, as they are called, badly tangled. If a tangle occurred in the rigging-cords close up to the mouth of the parachute the latter was obviously unable to open fully. When a parachute did not open properly it came down with a run, or, at any rate, much too fast, and either the man was hurt on landing or another hairbreadth escape was recorded. Sometimes parachutes came out of their cases with one or two of the rigging-cords over the top of the parachute: when this happened the parachute appeared to be bisected like a mitre or even divided into three like a clover leaf.

A parachute is merely a large circular sheet of material, twenty-eight feet in diameter, with a number of long cords attached to equidistant points round its edge. There may be as many as forty-eight of these cords, though in one French parachute, known as the Ors, there are only eight. In most makes the cords bifurcate, like a branch dividing into two, near the place where they are attached to the material of the parachute. The cords are generally about thirty feet long, and are all joined together at the bottom on to a hoop, or a ring of some sort, to which the top end of the man's life-line is also attached. The life-line is the cord which attaches the man to his parachute. The man must wear some sort of harness with a ring on it to fasten it to the life-line.

The material used for parachutes is



A Modern Parachute

With Calthrop's Guardian Angel Harness.

generally the very best Japanese silk, on account of its great strength, though the Germans, towards the end of the war, had to resort to old printed calico, such as servants' dresses are made of.

The silk or cotton portion of a parachute is generally alluded to as the umbrella, because it rather resembles that useful appliance, and because it is actually made in the shape of a cap or umbrella. The umbrella of a parachute requires one hundred square yards to make it, and, if made of silk, costs £40 for the silk alone.

Most boys are familiar with the general arrangement of a parachute, but there are thousands of people who never realize how big it is nor the great length of the rigging-cords.

When you jump from a balloon basket, or from an aeroplane or airship, you have to fall nearly seventy feet before the parachute is entirely clear of its case, and, even with the best parachutes, another forty or fifty feet before the parachute is open. It is a very long fall, and not at all pleasant: firstly, because you have an awful feeling of being sea-sick all the way; and, secondly, because you are never sure that the parachute is really going to open. When it does, your headlong career is very agreeably checked with rather a strong pull, and the rest of your downward journey to earth is wholly delightful, because you are all alone in your queer little conveyance, and it seems so truly wonderful that nothing but a few ounces of flimsy silk is between you and instant death.

The history of the parachute, strange though it may seem, dates back to long before balloons. A good many old scientists realized that a man could descend quite safely from any height supported only by a piece of outstretched canvas. Several such descents from trees and towers are known to have actually been undertaken: one by a man with the rather unpleasant name of Fausty Verancido. These early experimenters used a piece of canvas stretched out on a light wooden framework.

Montgolfier, the original inventor of balloons, himself made a couple of descents from the roof of his house, until he was lucky enough to get a condemned criminal to deputize for him.

Boys must beware of the folly of making such experiments themselves. Nothing could be more dangerous than to attempt to jump from the bough of a tree, or off a house, high wall, or cliff with the family carriage-umbrella. In the first place, the umbrella would instantly turn inside out and let you drop just as if you had no umbrella, and, in the second place, the

largest carriage-umbrella ever made is so much too small for the purpose that you would fall all the way at fatal speed. Even the lightest boy would need a parachute sixteen feet in diameter, and it would, of course, have to be completely outspread before the start of the descent from so low an elevation as a wall or window.

When balloons were invented in 1783, parachutes were almost at once brought into service as a means of life-saving in case of accident, though there is on record only one instance of their use for this purpose in those early days. This was a parachute escape made by a Pole named Kuparento.

In 1790 there were two very famous aeronauts, Blanchard and Garnerin; deadly rivals. Both simultaneously hit on the idea of giving parachuting displays in order to enhance their reputation. They both made numerous experiments with their dogs, and, finding that the animals came down unharmed every time, Blanchard plucked up his courage, and, in 1793, made his first descent at Basle, in Switzerland. The foolish fellow seems to have jumped before he really got high enough, in fact it is believed that he was barely a hundred feet from the ground, with the result that his parachute did not properly open and he came down with a run and broke a leg. Unfortunately, exact details of what happened are wanting. Garnerin followed suit with greater success, came to England, and made many descents throughout Europe. His sister, too, the first woman parachutist, was equally lucky, making more than forty descents without a scratch.

After this one or two parachutists got killed, from one cause or another, notably a man called Cocking, who, at Blackheath, in 1837, jumped with a funny sort of parachute held rigid by framework and shaped like an inverted lamp-shade; the whole thing collapsed at once and he fell five thousand feet. Parachuting was prohibited by law, but in 1889 Baldwin, the most famous parachutist, who is still alive and now in the American army, defied the law and made many successful descents at the Alexandra Palace. He never had an accident, nor had the Spencers, who followed him. The Spencer family claim to have made over one thousand descents between them with no more serious casualty than a broken leg. This was caused by the parachutist being swung against a wall as he descended.

Professional parachutists, who jump from balloons, always hang the parachute at full length from some part of the balloon, often with a hoop in the mouth of the parachute, which explains why the apparatus invariably

The "Cocking" Parachute of 1837

Note liberating device operated by hand rope from basket.

opens. The few cases of their failure to open have been traceable to some very definite cause. A girl was killed at Sheffield some years ago, for instance, owing to the inexcusable negligence which overlooked the fact that the mouth of her parachute was actually tied up.

Blanchard and Garnerin really took no chances, as they had the centre of their parachutes actually held open by whalebone umbrella ribs.

From 1890 to 1900 parachuting was very popular in America. There were as many parachutists as there were States. Some of these men were of a very careless and intemperate class. Accidents, mostly fatal, were frequent, but have unfortunately not been regularly recorded. In one case a parachute descended apparently all the way without opening, but just before landing it disappeared behind some trees on a hill. Everyone naturally thought that the parachutist had been killed. The local sheriff, as was his duty, roughed out a death certificate and got the parachutist's assistant, whom he met returning from the scene of the disaster with the parachute under his arm, to sign it as a witness to his employer's death. Imagine his astonishment when he learned next day that the witness who signed the death certificate was the parachutist himself, who had posed as his own assistant in order to get away out of the district without the bother of inquiries and consequent delay.

One reason why parachutes have not formed part of the equipment of every balloon voyage is because it was accidentally found out that if a balloon bursts the whole of the material of the envelope arches up into the netting, with which every balloon is covered, and thus forms a natural parachute. It is important, however, that the neck of the balloon should not be tied down, or, if it is, that it should be instantly released the moment the balloon splits. Balloons do not really burst and go off bang, like the coloured toy balloons that afford us so much pleasure at the seaside. The worst that can happen to a real balloon is for a big rent to appear, and for the gas to escape in a few seconds. There is, however, always time for the aeronaut to release the neck of the balloon, and let it transform itself into a parachute, if he keeps his wits about him.

So certain is this to happen that a Mr. Wise, an American aeronaut in the early part of last century, used deliberately to rip his balloon up at a great height in the air and trust to its descending as a parachute. He was quite an able writer, and wrote an interesting book in which he describes this " stunt " in very sensational terms. He refers to the " explosion valve ", and makes out that the balloon used to go off with a loud report. It is probable that if it had really done so it would have been blown to bits, and Wise would never have been able to write about it. He carried out this stunt once too often, however; for one day the balloon envelope, instead of collapsing neatly into the top of the netting, all ran up to one side, and the balloon came down at terrific speed, like anything but a parachute. Wise, acting up to his name, realized the danger of this amazing stunt and contented himself with orthodox aeronautics for the future.

In 1847 Messrs. Coxwell and Gypson ascended from Vauxhall Gardens with five passengers in a very large balloon. At about one thousand feet the valve of the balloon jammed, with the result that the gas could not escape rapidly enough through the neck, and so the balloon split. It commenced to descend at fatal speed. With commendable presence of mind the experienced aeronaut, Coxwell, without regard for the crowd below, hurled out the entire portable con-

tents of the car, iron anchor and all. Simultaneously he cut the line holding down the neck of the balloon, which almost immediately collapsed hemispherically into its upper half, forming a parachute efficient enough to modify the shock of contact with the ground. Considering that the balloon was at only a thousand feet from the ground, Coxwell must have acted with wonderful promptitude.

Owing to the appreciable time taken for the gas to escape from a balloon, even through a large rent, the success of this venture depends almost entirely on the height at which the accident occurs.

Captain Dale, at the Crystal Palace in 1892, was a victim of tying down the neck line and of the low height, only six hundred feet, at which his balloon split. He was killed, but the other two passengers, one of them his son, survived in spite of serious injuries. Dale built his own balloons, evidently of inferior material. At Calcutta, only a few months before this accident, a Lieutenant Mansfield, who ascended in one of Dale's balloons for the purpose of making a parachute descent, was killed in consequence of the balloon bursting and enveloping the parachute, so that the unhappy officer could not use the latter at the very moment when it could undoubtedly have saved his life. One would have thought Dale would have taken warning by this fatality.

So common did parachuting by inexpert performers become in America, after the startling successes of the far-famed parachutist Baldwin, that accidents resulting fatally more often than not seemed to be the order of the day.

Occasionally the parachutist has been drowned by alighting in water after having made a perfectly successful opening and descent. This is generally because he neglects to equip himself with a lifebelt when he obviously ought to do so.

Miss Lee was drowned at Cardiff in this way. The poor little girl, who was only sixteen, and an attendant at a shooting gallery in a fair, was advertised under the name of Madame Jeane de Paris (or something equally high-sounding), "the distinguished French parachutist". She knew nothing at all about making parachute jumps and was to receive only two pounds.

Evidently her courage failed her during the ascent, and the balloon rose to nine thousand feet before she could make up her mind to jump. She alighted in the sea a long way out, sinking before boats could reach her.

About the same time, in America, B. F. Vandergrift, a popular parachutist, lost his life by drowning under the most inexcusable circumstances, after having a terribly narrow escape of losing it in the air.

He ascended from Exhibition Park, Columbus, Ohio. At three thousand feet his balloon burst. Being a very experienced man he jumped at once in his parachute. No sooner had it opened than the deflated balloon fell on the top of it, threatening to envelop it. The parachute, however, closed, and, dropping clear, fell several hundred feet before again reopening. Vandergrift kept his presence of mind, and, by skilful manipulation of the parachute cords, he managed to dodge the falling balloon, which once again threatened to overwhelm him. This danger past, he found himself drifting rapidly into the swift Chatahoochee River. A boat immediately set out to rescue the unfortunate man, who struggled so desperately as he grabbed the side of the boat that, to avoid its capsizing, the occupants left him for a moment. During that moment he was drowned.

Considering that the parachutist, using a balloon, really has no choice as to his landing ground, it is extraordinary that so

few accidents should happen from making landings on house-tops and so on.

The skilled professional learns to steer his parachute, but only to a very slight extent, by pulling it down first to one side then to the other.

When dropping from an aeroplane, although it is a more dangerous performance in many ways, one has the enormous advantage of being able to fly to some point in the air, from which a safe landing is certain.

Baldwin, with all his skill, only just managed to avert an accident of an extraordinary nature.

He was performing in a colliery district. It seemed to be certain that, instead of landing on terra firma, he would go down the open mouth of a disused coal-mine. The mouth of the shaft was protected by a tall wooden barrier built round it. It was this which saved Baldwin's life. The parachute was gently drifting horizontally with the wind, as all parachutes do. Only by hauling down the strings on one side of the parachute with all his might, until it became like a sheet descending vertically, was Baldwin able to increase his speed of descent so as to come to earth before reaching the shaft. It was a piece of the amazing skill and promptness such as earned for the great parachutist his wonderful reputation.

The circumstances under which an American named Walcott was compelled to jump, in spite of a bad tangle, were quite extraordinary. The incident took place at Caracas, in Venezuela, on 28th October, 1895—a great national holiday.

Whilst keeping the crowd at bay, mounted policemen rode over the parachute, which was lying on the ground, and caused a tangle in it, which Walcott did not notice until he was well up in the air.

He was using a hot-air balloon, heated by a fire on the ground. These balloons rise rapidly and are very suitable for parachute descents, but as soon as the air inside them begins to cool, down they come.

At first Walcott decided not to jump at all, but to come down with the balloon. Imagine his horror when he perceived that the path of the balloon would deposit him in the centre of a lake alive with alligators. Without thinking, he took to his parachute, but the tangle prevented it from opening.

He fell nearly five thousand feet with the parachute only very slightly open, until at two hundred and fifty feet from the ground it suddenly opened and burst. He came down with terrific force and lay all night in great agony where he fell, the search party actually riding over his body in the darkness.

His faithful dog found him at last. Its barking brought an English lady to the spot at dawn.

A local doctor diagnosed the trouble as yellow fever, but a more competent practitioner found that Walcott had broken both his ankles, both his knee-caps, his right thigh bone, his right hip, hip-socket and pelvis, dislocated all his left ribs and broken four right ones, and had dislocated and broken his spine. After months of nursing he resumed his profession of aeronaut, but did not make any more descents in parachutes.

Though now over fifty years of age he was actively engaged in aeronautics during the late war.

Miss Fleet, an English parachutist, had an exciting adventure when making a descent from a balloon at Tal-y-Bont.

All went well until she landed. The parachute drifted her into the branches of a tall tree standing on a tiny island in the middle of the Usk River, which was then swollen by flood. A strong wind had

carried her some three miles from the scene of her departure. There she hung suspended by the tangled cordage, forty feet above the rushing waters, the roar of which would have rendered any cries for help quite inaudible.

Coolness and patience did not remedy the fact that it was nearly sundown.

Search parties hunted for her everywhere. It was by the merest good luck that someone looked up and saw her.

It was now almost dark; no one of the party could swim, but Professor Newall, the aeronaut, and now the lady's husband, attached to a rope, pluckily plunged into the rapids and fought his way across.

To a man of his agility the rest was easy, and so his future wife made the end of a not quite perfect day.

Miss Dolly Sheppard, another girl parachutist, once performed a plucky feat that nearly cost her her life. She and a Miss Brooks were to make a descent in two separate parachutes from the same balloon. Just before jumping Miss Brooks fainted. Without a moment's hesitation Miss Sheppard seized her companion and jumped with her in her arms—*on a single parachute.*

The weight of the two girls caused the parachute to descend at a very considerable speed. It was Miss Sheppard, however, who deliberately took the full force of the shock of landing, with the result that she spent the next six weeks on her back in a neighbouring farm-house, but with the satisfaction of knowing that she saved Miss Brooks from the smallest injury—a very plucky girl.

No less plucky, in a different way, is little Miss Boyden, the famous English aeroplane-parachutist. At Copenhagen, on 3rd October, 1920, Miss Boyden jumped from a German aeroplane when the wind was blowing at sixty miles an hour, so as not to disappoint a Danish crowd.

Blown by the wind her parachute travelled along at sixty miles an hour horizontally in addition to its downward speed. Her unfailing good luck did not, however, desert her. After grazing the tops of some trees on a hill, she just missed the chimneys of a tall house, crossed a road and a railway line, and skimmed only a few inches clear of some live high-tension electric wires and narrowly escaped alighting in a river, but, by letting go of her parachute when still about fourteen feet from the ground, she flopped into a marsh just where the river joined a small lake.

She was almost unhurt, and emerged from the rushes muddy but smiling. All the same she struck the ground with exactly the same force as if she had jumped off the footboard of the Holyhead express.

An Australian parachutist, named MacDermot, actually did once land on some live wires. He was severely burnt and received a knock-out electric shock.

Mr. Spencer, the best-known English parachutist, once landed between two railway trucks of a shunting goods train, fortunately stationary at the moment. On another occasion he landed in front of the engine of a starting train. The driver shut off steam and applied the brakes only just in the nick of time.

But the most wonderful escape of all was that of Lieutenant Morgan during the war. He jumped from his burning kite-balloon at three thousand feet, with a bad tangle that kept his parachute closed until it was only a few feet from the ground when it partially opened. In spite of this he was fully conscious the whole way until the force with which he struck the ground knocked him senseless. He says that he could think only of what he would like to do to the man who packed his parachute!

The Bridge

By H. Mortimer Batten

It was the blueberry harvest, and there, just where the old "war road" crossed the creek, the two wide sunlit aisles had assured an abundance of fruit, shielded from the wind yet open to the sunshine and the rain. With the remembrance of many seasons to back her, it was to this point that the mother black bear led her cubs, and oh, the profound luxury of it! All over the knee-deep scrub the berries grew in luscious bunches, and one could lie and bask and stuff and guzzle as black bears love to guzzle. There was no need to search about for the fruit—oh, no! One simply sprawled and grabbed and munched, and when one can lie down to it one can eat far more than it is possible to eat standing up.

The wind was from the direction of the creek, where whisky-jacks cackled and bluebirds flashed, and so occupied were the three bears that they did not hear the soft pad, pad of moccasined feet approaching from the opposite direction.

Tim Lawson was heading for the Flying Post Country as fast as ever his legs would carry him, and half the population of the mining camp was heading in the same direction. There had, of course, been a gold strike, and the rest of the rabble were sticking to the water-route, which was the obvious way. Tim, however, knew the country so well that he had decided to travel overland, thereby, he considered, arriving at the new El Dorado at least twelve hours ahead of the rest of the stumbling horde, which would enable him to claim the best of the land not already pegged out. But now, as he suddenly topped the mound, he saw the mother bear and her cubs feeding among the blueberries directly below.

Bears, like most creatures of the dense timber, have very indifferent sight, as normally they depend entirely upon their keen sense of smell; and from his standpoint Tim could see only the massive hindquarters of the mother bear, her hind legs straddled out grotesquely among the blueberries. So she went on munching, entirely unconcerned, but one of the cubs had its head towards him, and for some seconds gazed at him with pretty wonderment. Then, with the most child-like gesture imaginable, the little creature began to drag at its mother's ear with one forepaw, squealing softly, and endeavouring to induce her to look in Tim's direction.

Eventually she did so, then calmly she sat up on her haunches, her forepaws dangling limply, sniffing the air and staring at Tim, while on either side of her the two little cubs, exact counterparts of herself, assumed precisely the same attitude, presenting a picture that the prospector would always remember.

Evidently the wind veered for the merest fraction of time, and the mother bear, who, up to that moment, had been totally unable to make Tim out, dropped to earth with a veritable snort of terror. "It's a man, my hat!" one could almost hear her cry, and in her ignominious haste she sprawled over her two cubs, sending them spinning, as

she headed pell-mell for the dense timber.

Then, all at once, a sense of her own maternal responsibilities seemed to return to the old bear. She pulled up short, and, grunting an order to her cubs, she sat up in the centre of the trail, covering their retreat, and clearly forbidding the man to approach.

Tim, who had just about as much respect for black bears as he had for wood hares, laughed aloud at the sight of the two little animated barrels waddling as fast as they could towards the creek. One of them was so full that he evidently decided that somersaulting would be easier than running, and so he rolled and somersaulted all down the bank as only a black bear can.

Now, across the creek lay a single tree, which for many years had served as a footbridge for the wild folk who dwelt thereabouts, and Tim fully expected the two little bears to cross it, duly to be followed by their mother. But, instead, the cubs dropped straight down the bank at the water's edge, and, so far as Tim could judge, they were actually taking up their hiding among the roots of the old tree, along which he would have to force his way in order to cross the creek.

Now this was awkward, for Tim was in no mood to waste time, and certainly he had no desire to harm either the mother bear or her cubs. All his life he had lived in a bush country, and in the days of his boyhood, away in the Tobique Valley, he had many times reared little cubs and acquired a very real affection for them. He had seen more wild black bears than he could remember, had fed little bands of them outside his tent on dark nights when they were literally starving owing to forest fire, and he had never yet found one which was otherwise than ready to respond to kindly treatment. But a mother bear with her cubs is, of course, a highly specialized line of business, and none but a fool would trespass upon what she considered her rights.

No sooner had the cubs taken cover then the she-bear ambled off into the bush, but Tim knew very well that she was quite close at hand and watching him. He paused to weigh things up. He had trapped along this creek a few winters ago, and he knew very well that there was no other crossing for several miles on either side. The creek was deep and sluggish, and to swim it was out of the question—firstly, because Tim could not swim, and secondly, because his stampede pack was full for the most part of perishable goods. The tree which, thanks to a bygone gale, spanned the creek, was a giant among its fellows, and wildly improbable was it that he would find another growing conveniently at the water's edge. No, there was nothing for it but to wait till the cubs vacated their stronghold, and assuredly they would not do so while Tim remained where he was.

Under the circumstances Tim did the wisest thing that could be done. Slipping off his pack, he left it on the ground to indicate that he had not permanently left the place, then, with his hands in his pockets, whistling a jaunty air, he strode back the way he had come. He judged that the cubs would thankfully leave their present cover and dash off with their mother through the bush ere he was a hundred yards away, for they would not fancy the place so long as his own hostile pack remained in sight. But, though no one knew the wild folk better than Tim, he was for once wrong.

Still whistling, so that the bears could keep a gauge upon his distance, the prospector retraced his steps for two hundred yards, then, considering that he had allowed ample time for the coast to clear, he went back to redeem his pack. Of course there

was nothing to be seen, but in order to make sure Tim drew a stick of dynamite from his box, drove his jimmy bar into the earth, and placed and ignited the charge. The report that followed, succeeded by the wild screaming of whisky-jacks up and down the creek, was calculated to scare all the game within four miles.

When the smoke had cleared and the bits had come back to earth, Tim took up his pack, and confidently approached the bridge, every twig of which he recalled from his trapping days. He had indeed taken more than one fur beaver from that very log, and so he set his feet confidently in the old familiar holds, and began to cross.

Scarcely was he well over the water when he heard a hoarse grunt behind him, and, half turning, Tim saw the huge black outline of the mother bear almost at his heels.

The inevitable happened, but it happened so quickly that Tim never knew how. The cold, blue waters closed over his head, and down, down he went, till he felt his feet in contact with the soft bed of the creek. Instinctively he struck upwards, and his feet sank. For one awful second he was detained by the clinging clay, then, absorbing jorums of water, he struggled upwards and broke surface.

A leafless branch was just within Tim's reach, and so he clutched it. Not a yard from him was the bank of the creek, here a labyrinth of vertical twisted roots—the roots of the tree by which he had tried to cross. Haunted by the notion that the twig to which he clung might break at any moment, allowing him to sink once more, Tim made a lunge for the shore and luckily obtained a hold.

His position, however, was not an enviable one. Striving for a foothold, he at length obtained one about fifteen inches below his hands. Doubled up in this unnatural position, he was unable to lift himself from the surface owing to the fact that his pack was full of water, anchoring him down as securely as if he were roped to the bed of the river.

At this stage of the proceedings Tim happened to look ahead, whereupon, among the shadowy roots easily within reach, he beheld four bright eyes and two dark outlines—the cubs, closely watching him! At the same time he felt a strong gust of wind in his face, and, looking up, he saw that the mother bear, lying flat on the trunk above, was reaching down with one paw, aiming blow after blow at his head.

Now Tim knew very well that if one of those blows went home he would sink and never break surface any more. The whole horrible predicament was owing to the proximity of those cubs, which, evidently scared by the explosion of the dynamite, were huddled close together, and not to be so easily dislodged. Still something had to be done to dislodge them, and done quickly, and Tim, now in a condition of mind bordering upon panic, drew his hunting-knife and aimed a vicious stab at the nearer of the two cubs.

As things happened the wound he inflicted was not a very serious one, though the knife passed half across the cub's face, narrowly missing its left eye and travelling thence across the cheek to the corner of its mouth. The little creature screamed frantically, whereupon the mother, in her frenzied haste, fell off the log and landed with a terrific splash into the water.

As soon as the cubs saw her they scrambled from their hiding-place and flopped into the water, losing no time in joining their mother; and with feelings of the utmost relief Tim watched the three of them swim, bunched together, across to the other side, where they speedily vanished into the bush.

Tim's sensations of relief, however, were

The bear was aiming blow after blow at his head

soon tempered by a realization of the vexatious order of things. Dragging himself out on to dry land, he began to run through the contents of his pack. His map was ruined, so also his folding camera —if not permanently, at any rate for this trip—on which he had hoped to obtain a photographic record of his new claims. His flour, dynamite, buckwheat, sugar, &c., were so much slush, though his tobacco might dry out. He decided to take off his socks and wring them out, when—he paused, staring at his moccasins, still thick with white clay from the creek bed.

Yes, there was a distinct showing of yellow grains among that white clay! Hurriedly Tim scraped it off into the palm of his hand, then he washed it off quickly in the creek, and again examined the contents of his palm. A surprising sprinkling indeed!—and ere one hour had gone by Tim, by means of his frying-pan attached to the end of a long pole, was fishing up samples from the creek bed, washing them quickly, and finding everywhere the same story. The creek was a veritable gold-mine!

Tim did not continue his trip, but instead he pegged out several claims on and about the point at which he judged the gold-bearing spring entered the creek.

. . . . . .

Some years later, long after the building of Blueberry Mining Camp—one of the most prosperous minor camps in the north—a millionaire mine-owner was travelling by canoe away up the creek in search of game, when a big black bear came down to the water's edge and began to drink. The sportsman raised his rifle, but as he did so the bear lifted its head and looked at him. And he saw, across its left cheek, beginning at the eye and ending at the corner of its mouth, the mark of an old scar, rendered conspicuous by the hair having grown white upon it.

The crucial moment passed. The bear turned and ambled away.

"Why didn't you shoot?" asked the man with the paddle.

The millionaire laughed. It was a strangely unnatural laugh which showed some depth of feeling.

"No," he said. "But for that bear I should still be shadow-chasing. I owe him more than I owe any man alive! Had I killed that bear I should never have forgiven myself."

The man in the stern did not understand, and did not try to understand. He was content to consign it all to the whimsicality of the great, but Tim Lawson went his way thankful that, in the moment of excitement, he had not forgotten his oath, made some years before, that he would never again fire at a black bear. For to-day he had seen one of the cubs to which he owed his fortune.

The Bellingham Jewels

By Bogey Junior

I

What is now known as the episode of the celebrated Bellingham jewels created quite a stir at the time.

When it was learnt that Mrs. Possit's diamonds had disappeared from the basin in the Doctor's bathroom on the first floor, where Mrs. Possit had been washing a piece of old Maltese lace, and that the Doctor had offered a reward of five shillings for their recovery, the sensation may be better imagined than described. The best detective talent in the Lower School came to the surface at once, and it must be admitted that at this time the Lower School rather fancied itself.

The facts—so far as could be ascertained from Warrender, who is in the Army Class, and enjoys the confidence of Mrs. Possit to an unusual degree—were briefly as follows.

The diamonds were three in number, one large and two small, set in a gold ring or hoop. When Mrs. Possit, who had laid her ring on the side of the basin, had thrown open the window and hung the lace on the ivy outside to dry, she left the bathroom and forgot all about the ring. She only remembered it as she was giving the parrot its lump of sugar some time later, when she suddenly noticed that the celebrated Bellingham diamonds were no longer on her finger.

" How long afterwards was that?" Ronnie Adams asked pointedly.

" Time not known. Probably an hour," said Warrender, and Ronnie said, " Ah!"

" What are you gasping at, young 'un?" asked Warrender. " It's my opinion she caught it in the lace and hurled it out of the window. Now you know as much about it as I do. Go ahead and find it, and there's five bob for you. It's probably somewhere in the ivy on the wall. Personally, I'm not competing."

" Just a moment, Warrender," said Ronnie, in quiet but nevertheless masterful accents. " The window of the bathroom was open, you say."

" It was."

" Well, was there any other means of getting into the bathroom?"

" Yes. The door."

" I was thinking about the ivy."

" Well, young 'un, I wouldn't. You might conceivably break your valuable neck and thereby plunge us in untimely gloom."

But Ronnie was not listening. With his hands sunk thoughtfully in the depths of his trousers' pockets he was staring absently through the gymnasium window. When he spoke again it was to observe that the ivy outside the bathroom had been cut recently. From where we stood one obtained an uninterrupted view of the Doctor's bathroom window, with the gardener's boy on a tall ladder a few yards beyond, snipping away at the ivy with a pair of hedge clippers.

" At the time of the theft," said Ronnie, who had, in a way, assumed control of the proceedings, " Herbert must have been clipping almost round the window. The

Little was to be learnt

ladder would rest a little beyond the window ledge, but we must not condemn Herbert too hastily. Let us examine the ground thoroughly."

We were all greatly impressed with the manner in which Ronnie had tackled the problem, and as we could not all swarm into the Doctor's bathroom we agreed to his being, in a manner of speaking, the official detective for the Fourth. I was myself fortunate in being selected to accompany him as " Dr. Watson ", though I admit the choice was largely influenced by my possessing the only magnifying glass available.

As it turned out, little was to be learnt by an examination of the ground outside the bathroom window, the gravel being scarred and ploughed with the footprints of Herbert, whilst it did not take a Sherlock Holmes to deduce that the Third had been searching the ivy pretty thoroughly with a rake. Nevertheless, Ronnie picked up some scraps of sponge and half a square inch of soap which were lying near the wall, whilst I found a mangled tube of Eureka tooth paste behind the roots of the ivy itself. Ronnie invited me to taste the soap and say what it was, but I could tell carbolic without feeding on it, and he observed:

" Your perspicacity, my dear Crabbie, amazes me."

He put the scraps of sponge and the soap in an envelope, and, after measuring the distance between the wall and certain marks in the gravel, which may or may not have been caused by the ladder, led the way into

the garden, where Mrs. Possit was nursing what looked like a bath sponge, but on closer examination revealed itself as Tootoo, a rare and costly specimen of the Patagonian beetle-hound.

" If you will pardon us, Mrs. Possit," he began suavely, " we are anxious to ascertain one or two particulars concerning your missing diamonds."

Mrs. Possit, who is many years younger than her husband and remarkable for her good looks, said:

" Yes, darling, what would you like to know?"

" In the first place," went on Ronnie, blushing like a ripe tomato, " why did you remove the ring from your finger?"

" Why, to wash a piece of lace, of course. Why else would I take it off?"

" But," persisted Ronnie, " couldn't you have washed the lace with your ring on?"

" Of course," answered Mrs. Possit, laughing, " but it might have torn the lace. Also, it was a trifle large and might have slid off in the soapy water."

Ronnie said: " Ah!" and Mrs. Possit laughed again and exclaimed:

" Why, I do believe the child suspects me of stealing my own ring."

This made Ronnie look as if a wasp had got down his neck, especially when I joined in the mirth. In a sickly sort of voice he asked for permission to visit the bathroom, and when we were out of hearing turned on me and said fiercely:

" Look here, Crabbie, if you tell any of those blighters that she called me a darling——"

" My dear old Sherlock," I replied, " not for worlds. We'll keep that for our Memoirs. But if you hear me chortling in my sleep, you need not wake me up to ask what I'm laughing at."

He did not seem entirely satisfied with my answer, for he led on silently towards the bathroom.

The Third, of course, had already raided it and crabbed practically the whole of the evidence. I examined the polished floor minutely with the magnifying glass, and even dusted the water carafe with tooth powder to bring out finger prints, but not a decent clue could we find. It was a hopeless business, and I remarked to Ronnie that one couldn't expect anything better from an unwashed, ill-disciplined mob like the Third.

" They don't even know what soap is for," I remarked, pointing bitterly at the basin. " Look at that scented abomination. They've actually been trying to eat it."

Ronnie examined the soap, which had a piece cut out of one side, and I protested when he slipped it into his pocket.

" It's a new cake," I pointed out, " and they're certain to miss it. And, as no one who knows 'em would dream of suspecting the Third of stealing soap, they'll blame us."

Ronnie smiled a deep, mysterious smile and said: " My dear Crabbie, you improve."

Then he proceeded to examine the window sill and ledge with my magnifying glass, and pointed to certain scratches on the woodwork.

" Do those support your theory?" I asked scornfully, and added, when he persisted in remaining silent, " because if you're thinking of Herbert's clogs he must have been turning somersaults all over the place."

Ronnie was greatly struck by my observation.

" What makes you think that, fathead?" he asked.

" A number of similar marks on the towel rail and elsewhere," I pointed out. " There is more in this, darling, than meets the eye."

His foot struck the panel of the door as I closed it tactfully behind me and turned the key.

"*Pax*," I breathed through the keyhole, and the answer came back in level but menacing tones:

"You are acquainted with my methods, my dear Watson."

"I am compelled to admit it, Holmes," I returned. "That is why I don't open this door till you promise to keep your boots to yourself. But *hist*! Someone approaches!"

I threw open the door as a deputation of the Fifth, headed by Barstow, made its appearance at the end of the passage.

The rival sleuths slouched past one another in furtive, brooding suspicion, and, as I paused at the head of the staircase to look back upon the scene we had just left, a husky voice was distinctly audible from within the bathroom uttering the solitary word:

"Baffled!"

II

It must be admitted we had got nothing to speak of in the way of evidence, and, but for Ronnie's collection of odds and ends, and my tube of tooth paste, I do not think we would have found courage to face the Fourth. As Ronnie explained, it was all very well for Sherlock Holmes, but there were always clues, and pretty good clues too, in every one of his mysteries; whereas we had nothing but a chunk of soap, which would certainly be missed, and some scraps of sponge—not even a blob of mud off Herbert's clogs. You can't be expected to go about solving mysteries without clues, so I suggested that we might question Herbert. But Ronnie was not partial to this idea.

"If he is guilty," I suggested, "we should know it at once."

"We would," Ronnie agreed drily, "and that's just the trouble. Herbert's eleven stun if he's an ounce. No, it would hardly be worth the five bob."

"He might be open to reason."

"On the other hand, he might not. I'm not risking it, Crabbie. We've got to evolve a theory. What's yours?"

"I think Herbert took it," I replied.

"So do I, but it's not a good theory. We've got to suspect something a little less obvious. What about suspecting Possit?"

I stared at him to make sure he was quite serious. It was certainly a dazzling idea, but I did not see how it was to be managed.

"You yourself filled the radiator of his Ford with water this morning, didn't you?" he asked. I admitted this with a nod, and he went on: "Did he put in any petrol?"

I saw what he was driving at now.

"You're a marvel!" I said. "Of course he always puts soap round the brass cap of the tin to keep the stuff from evaporating. And he's a bit absent-minded at times. Your theory is that he went to the bathroom for soap, spotted the ring on the basin, pocketed it, and forgot all about it. I see it all. And what about the bits of sponge?"

"They don't come into it except to show he was in the bathroom."

It is not always easy to follow Ronnie when he begins to reason, and he had to explain that the fragments of sponge were undoubtedly part of the one he kept for cleaning his golf balls.

"It fits in like a puzzle," he said, but I was not quite so sure of it.

"If you want to convince someone that Possit plays golf," I objected, "would you feel called upon to produce his golf clubs? We all know he washes himself and his golf balls in the bathroom, and there's no need to trot out the sponge with which he does it. It's much more likely that Mrs. Possit trimmed off the sponge and heaved

the pieces out. You know her craze for tidiness."

"I know," Ronnie said, "and that is just why I don't think *she'd* heave the sponge out of the window. And you may have noticed the bits of sponge were all wet, and there has been no rain for two days. Don't talk rot. If he didn't heave it out, who did?"

"The thief probably," I answered, and, as it happened, I was right.

III

Barstow was baffled.

"I thought it might have gone down the pipe from the basin," he said, "but the grating's too small. I quite agree that it looks pretty black for Possit."

This is where little Radcliffe came in. He was a red-headed kid in the Third, and had edged his way up to hear what was going on. He was examining the soap and the pieces of sponge which were lying on the table, pushing them about with his finger and whistling softly to himself.

"Barstow," he said thoughtfully, "what will you bet the Doctor has it? Because I'll lay you two to one he hasn't."

"Oh," said Barstow, drawing himself up, "the babe and suckling is about to chuck a little wisdom about! The fathers of the flock will gladly receive instruction. Fire away, *mon petit*."

Radcliffe blushed and stammered, and suddenly stamped from the room as though overcome with confusion. Ten minutes later, however, he was back again with a sort of inspired look on his face, and laid the great Bellingham diamonds on the table.

"We *are* a lot of fatheads," he panted; "why, the thing was staring us in the face. Look at those torn shreds of sponge, and that piece scooped out of the soap. Have you ever seen Mrs. Possit's parrot shinning up the ivy with its beak and claws?"

Of course now we saw it all, and a sicker-looking crowd you never met.

"If the fowl had to use its beak and claws to climb up the ivy," I pointed out, "it would find some difficulty in getting down with the ring in its clenched teeth, so to speak. But perhaps it wore it on the third finger of its left paw."

The other chaps looked their approval of this sally, but he simply replied that he didn't say it had climbed up the ivy.

"I don't pretend to know how it got there," he said. "It probably followed Mrs. Possit up the stairs. But I do know how it got back. It walked down the stairs with the ring in its beak, and when it got to the landing, there stood its arch enemy, Tootoo, the beetle-hound. Parrots, as is well known, cannot defend themselves against beetle-hounds with their mouths full, so Polly sprang on to one of the palm tubs, dropped the ring inside, and gave battle."

"Some detective!" said Barstow. "But how did you deduce that the parrot had had a turn up with Tootoo?"

"Because I saw the end of it," said Radcliffe. "Tootoo was yelping his head off on the landing, and I popped along to see what was the matter, and there was poor little Tootoo with wads of wool missing, legging it down the stairs ahead of the infuriated parrot, who was spitting out chunks of Tootoo and using the most shocking language. So when I saw that piece of soap and the bits of sponge—oh, well, any ass could tell where the ring was likely to be!"

Well, perhaps he was right, but, as we pointed out to him, we hadn't the advantage of having seen Tootoo being mangled by the criminal. So there was no need for him to put on side about it.

Competition Swimming

By Ed. W. O'Hara

Swimming is one of the few arts that cannot be taught by correspondence, and no amount of reading or dry-land exercises will make any juvenile swimmer sufficiently a master of aquatic sport to justify his entry into first-class competition. Nevertheless, a hint or two on general training, after the elements of swimming have been mastered, may prove useful to juvenile aspirants for championship honours. Great Britain has been compelled time and again to abandon the laurels of supremacy, both in the open sea and in the swimming-pond, to the United States, not through physical inefficiency, nor yet through inability, nor through lack of enthusiasm for swimming as a sport, but simply because of the non-existence of any system of organized training. In the United States what is described as " intensive training " is practised for all events, big or small, and this is not confined to aquatic sport alone, but applies equally to all others (and there are many) that figure in the programme of the Olympic Games. Of course there are exceptions to every general rule, and Duke Kahanamoku, the famous Hawaii Islander, is a striking example. In the Pacific Islands children are thrown into the sea by their mothers when only two or three years old. The method is crude, for a child either sinks or swims. Hawaiians may therefore be classified as " born to the sea "; by nature they are swimmers; they early discover their own limitations and set out to remedy them. Duke Kahanamoku, by nature a Hawaiian, is by a political freak an American, since " Happy Hawaii " belongs to the United States, and he is therefore eligible to maintain the aquatic supremacy of " the star-spangled banner " against all overseas competitors. Passengers on steamships calling at Malta have frequently been amused in Valetta Harbour by throwing coins into deep water. These are eagerly dived for by Maltese youths, and rarely, if ever, does a diver come to the surface without his booty.

These two instances serve to illustrate the connection between practice and efficiency. There is nothing miraculous about either the speedy performances of Kahanamoku or the deep-diving of the Maltese. Both are the result of bodily fitness and continual practice.

All forms of practice can be included within the meaning of the word " training ". In training, a programme must be decided upon, and in arranging this it is necessary to consider the fundamental requirements of the juvenile athlete. These may be grouped under the headings of bodily condition, distance, stroke, breathing, and direction.

In conditioning for swimming it is a great fault to have the muscles too hard. Certain exercises, such as cycling and the lifting of heavy weights, encourage this and must be avoided. Walking, ball-punching, and easy chest-deepening and broadening exercises with a chest expander, or Swedish drill exercises are useful and are recommended. Massage and friction applied with

a hard towel will also assist in keeping the muscles at the necessary degree of suppleness and pliancy. Tobacco in any form must be shunned, if only for the bad effects it shows on lung capacity.

Distance is important, and is so frequently ignored that many promising swimmers, as in the case of runners, fail to score even after a tremendous effort. Of the three recognized distances it is necessary to train for the right one. Long-distance swimming is more useful for open-sea work than for anything else; short or "sprint" distance is useful in the average confined pond; and middle-distance is a fairly useful all-round performance. A good hard swim will settle the most suitable length for the individual as regards stamina, but, strangely enough, no two swimmers perform the same stroke in the identical manner, and certain classes of stroke are suited only to certain distances. This, again, is a case for experiment. Warren Kealoha, an eighteen-year-old Hawaiian youth, is the Olympic back-stroke champion, and has put up some astonishing speed records. W. J. Howcroft, a British expert in this stroke, tells us that from ten to fourteen years of age it is most easily learned, but is difficult to master thereafter. Much depends then upon the style of stroke employed and the use that is made of it. To make any stroke correctly it is not necessary to attempt to copy the style of some other person. A model is useful as a standard, but once the use of the motions has been grasped, gracefulness, speed, and comfort are the guiding factors. An expert critic should be asked to advise on the first of these points.

We have mentioned comfort, a most necessary thing in covering long distances, and one that goes hand in hand with the breathing system. Hundreds of amateurs attempt to breathe between each stroke, but this is entirely unnecessary. At certain definite movements, according to the stroke employed, and at no other time are the lungs refilled; and the actual number of times inhalation may be required per minute depends on the lung capacity of the swimmer. Each swimming stroke has its own breathing movement, and this should be mastered as an essential to comfort.

Direction would seem an absurd subject for which to train, but in swimming in the open sea there are many amateurs who cannot keep a straight course. Training in an artificial bath or pond, with its clearly marked lines running along the bottom, assists in keeping direction. The distance is short and the deviation is little, but where the length to be swum is extended, that yard or so of deviation develops into a heavy handicap, and in competition swimming it will add quite a few yards more to the actual distance.

To sum up, the principal things to study in training for swimming competitions are: suitability of distance, kind of swimming stroke and the peculiarities of the swimmer's own stroke, correct breathing at the right time, and lastly, straightness of course.

During practice spins at racing speed, the actual distance required should always be exceeded a little. If 100 yards is necessary, 110 should be attempted at the very least. Staying power for the longer distance ensures a slight reserve of power for the final spurt that so often makes a big difference between success and failure.

Finally, there is a vast difference between 100 metres and 100 yards. The Olympic Games favour the metric system, and, every juvenile swimmer being a prospective British Olympic champion, a few moments comparison of the British and metric measures may save a great deal of misunderstanding in days to come.

SWIMMING RECORDS

Cross Channel

Swimmer.	Ports.	Date	Time. Hr.	Time. Min.
Captain Matthew Webb. ..	Dover–Calais (About 21 miles).	Aug. 24–25, 1875.	21	45
Thomas William Burgess. ..	Dover–Calais (About 21 miles).	Sept. 5–6, 1911.	22	35

World's Amateur Records—Free Style

Distance.	Swimmer and Nationality.	Date.	Time. Min.	Time. Sec.
100 yards. ..	D. P. Kahanamoku, U.S.A.	5th Sept., 1917.	0	53
100 metres. ..	D. P. Kahanamoku, U.S.A.	24th Aug., 1920.	0	$60\frac{2}{5}$
220 yards. ..	T. Cann, U.S.A.	10th April, 1920.	2	$19\frac{4}{5}$
440 yards. ..	Norman Ross, U.S.A.	9th Oct., 1919.	5	$14\frac{3}{5}$
500 yards. ..	Norman Ross, U.S.A.	9th Oct., 1919.	5	$58\frac{4}{5}$
880 yards. ..	Norman Ross, U.S.A.	10th Jan., 1920.	11	$24\frac{1}{5}$
1000 yards. ..	D. Billington, U.K.	22nd July, 1905.	13	$34\frac{4}{5}$
1 mile. ..	G. R. Hodgson, Canada.	10th July, 1912.	23	$34\frac{6}{10}$

Back Stroke

Distance.	Swimmer and Nationality.	Date.	Time. Min.	Time. Sec.
100 metres. ..	W. Kealoha, U.S.A.	20th Aug., 1920.	1	$14\frac{4}{5}$
150 yards. ..	P. M'Gillivray, U.S.A.	30th March, 1918.	1	$48\frac{4}{5}$
400 metres. ..	G. Blitz, Belgium.	16th Sept., 1921.	5	$59\frac{1}{5}$

Breast Stroke

Distance.	Swimmer and Nationality.	Date.	Time. Min.	Time. Sec.
100 metres. ..	W. Lutzow, Germany.	24th May, 1914.	1	$16\frac{4}{5}$
200 yards. ..	E. Toldi, Hungary.	20th Aug., 1911.	2	$39\frac{3}{5}$
200 metres. ..	The late Percy Courtman (of Old Trafford), United Kingdom.	28th July, 1914.	2	$56\frac{3}{5}$
400 metres. ..		11th Dec., 1912.	6	$14\frac{2}{5}$
500 metres. ..		11th Dec., 1912.	7	51

That Cannibal Trout

By R. J. Maclennan

It is a common saying among visitors to Inverey, Argyllshire, that everybody knows Pizzie Mitchell and his chums, Sam Petrie and Billy Maguire. They are not there all the year round like the pier-master or the postman, the Town Cross or the Parish Church steeple. Pizzie, Sam, and Billy are to be met at Inverey only in August. Only then. Their fame, however, rests on certain recognized points of interest. Pizzie has to his credit the largest trout ever caught in the River Rey—a fine, plump, rainbow fellow of over 4 lb.; Sam shares the distinction of having been with him when he landed it; and Billy, while in at the death too, declares that, "beyond all such reflected glory, the visitors, and even the natives of Inverey, love me for my nice honest face and simple appealing beauty. In other words my 'physog'." But Billy is nothing if not droll.

The three young stalwarts were at Inverey again in the August following the year of The Great Rainbow Capture, but discovered, as all anglers discover, that big trout are not so plentiful as dandelions, nor are they to be picked up like fir cones.

"Seems to me," said Billy one day, when the month was wearing to a close, "the Inverey trout have been studying the *Oban Times*. They have read what Pizzie did to their uncrowned king last year, and they have no eager desire to be assassinated, nor to lie in state decorated with parsley on any dish. We haven't had a decent basket amongst us since we came."

"What could you expect," said Pizzie; "there's been no rain, the river has not been so low for years. The Pebble Pool is weedy, hopelessly weedy. What we need is a flood to wash the stream clean before we can hope for anything. Isn't that so, Sam?"

"We might advertise for one," broke in Billy. "'Wanted, on or before the 30th August, a good-going flood, one rather less effective than the Noah brand preferred. Not one that will spoil the harvest, but one that will tickle up the trout to a sense of what's expected of them. Apply, enclosing testimonials of high-water mark, to Messrs. P. Mitchell, S. Petrie, and B. Maguire, Inverey.' That's the sort of thing that should fetch them."

"You're full of gloriously practical ideas, Billy," said Sam, with a smile. "I'll support the advertising idea if you agree to pay the cost of three insertions."

"Too near the end of the holidays," chimed in Pizzie. "He's suffering from shortage of cash."

"You're right," said Billy. "There have been recent signs of the approach of an acute financial crisis. The trout may be scarce, but cash is scarcer still. If either of you, however, cares to consider the purchase of an old fishing reel that won't wind, or wishes to acquire a couple of frayed casts, at a moderate outlay, then business might revive sufficiently to permit of the advertising proposition being seriously considered."

"Nothing doing," said Pizzie.

" Less than nothing in my case," said Sam.

" Well, in that event," said Billy, " prepare for the worst. I will now break terrible news. I will tell you why we have caught so few trout this year. I never knew myself till this morning, when I had the horrible truth thrust upon me by Mrs. M'Fayden, the shoemaker's wife. She said it was a judgment on us."

" A what?" cried Pizzie.

" Let him talk," said Sam. " He's got some more nonsense to work off. Come on with it, Billy."

" Right you are! You shall have it. Mrs. M'Fayden insists that it is a judgment and sentence. She says we go flinging flies to the fish hoping to catch them on barbed hooks, and that it is our unkindness that is bringing the punishment of disappointment on us. And, mind you, she may be right."

" And she may be wrong," said Sam.

" She *is* wrong," said Pizzie, whose cheeks were flushed. " The only fishing worth while is fly fishing, and there is no harm in an artificial lure. The use of live bait may be cruel. I've no use for it myself, but fly fishing is another business altogether. The trout tries to catch the fly and the fly catches the trout. That's quite fair to my mind. It is the same when you spin the artificial minnow. The big fellow tries to worry the little fellow. He rushes at him to bite him, and is surprised to find he has met his match. Besides, there is always the sporting chance that the trout gets off."

" Never, when I'm fishing," said Billy. " I jolly well see to that."

" What about the half-pounder you said you lost to-day?" asked Sam quietly.

" Oh, he asked to get off to keep an urgent appointment, and I said: ' All right, old chap, but I'll expect to see you to-morrow about the same time.' "

" Trout that have taken a fly and got off with it," said Pizzie, " have often been caught again with the fly still in their mouths."

" That's true," said Sam.

" And I'll tell you more than that," continued Pizzie; " a trout's mouth is in some ways like a horse's hoof, only not so hard. You've seen a blacksmith nail a horseshoe on with sharp nails. Does it hurt the horse? Not a little bit. Could trout fight as they do fight if they hadn't a fair chance? Of course they couldn't. Mrs. M'Fayden was talking nonsense."

" Ah, Pizzie," said Billy, " I like to hear you when you get excited. I didn't worry about Mrs. M'Fayden. I remembered that she was very pleased to accept half a dozen trout I took in to her last year, and if I had been inclined to be rude to-day, which I never am—no, no, never, never, being a model whom both of you might copy—well, I could have said much!"

" As, for example," put in Sam, " that she was talking through her hat."

" Precisely," said Billy. " These were my unspoken words, and I might have made it her Sunday hat, for its magenta ribbons and pink flowers would lend colour to any tale. On that point, however, I need say no more. Nuff said! I've better news for you. Great news! Splendid news! Magnificent news!"

" I know," said Sam, " you've spotted another rainbow trout in one of the pools."

" All trout in the pools are already spotted," replied Billy. " There are no trout that are not spotted. That is where we and they differ. We are only spotted when we have measles, or something of that sort."

" You do talk terrific rot sometimes, Billy," said Pizzie, with a sigh. " Can't you stop your gammon for a bit and tell us the real news?"

" My real news? I'm just coming to that," said Billy. " Our luck is in at last. The one and only real old sport I ever met has arrived at the Inverey Arms. He came last night in his car. I saw him this morning. What is more, he saw me. He is here!"

Billy, throwing his cap in the air, performed something in the nature of a joy dance.

" You mean——" said Sam.

" Who should I mean?" said Billy.

" Not Mr. Whitcomb who showed us how to get the big rainbow trout last year?" said Pizzie.

" The self-same gentleman and none other."

" How absolutely ripping!" said Sam.

" I call it stunning," said Pizzie. " But tell, Billy, what did he say to you?"

" He asked what luck we were having and I said little or none, so he introduced me to his daughter. The minute I saw her I felt that, anyhow, *my* luck had turned. Rather hard on you chaps. I know you're frightfully envious, and all that sort of thing, but I could see that my manly beauty appealed to her. She's a rare girl, and jolly pretty. A bit oldish, perhaps. Twenty-three, I should say. Not altogether unattached, if the ring she wears counts for anything, and got only one fault that I could notice. Doesn't get names into her memory. Mine, as you know, is William Wellington Maguire, sometimes called ' William the Conqueror ', yet she kept referring to me as ' the nice little boy '. Still, I forgive her the unintentional slip. The ' nice ' at least was correct. The rest doesn't matter."

Billy stuck his thumbs in his waistcoat, swelled his chest, and, with a broad grin, regarded Sam and Pizzie.

" That's absolutely topping news," said Pizzie.

" What? About his daughter, do you mean?" said Billy.

" Don't be an ass," retorted Pizzie. " I mean it's topping to think Mr. Whitcomb has come. I thought he wasn't to be here until September."

" So I thought too," said Sam.

" Well, your thoughts led you astray this time," said Billy. " He is here, and, what is more, he asked me to convey to you his very kindest regards, and to request that you both keep Thursday first free, as he wants us to go with him to the Dhu Loch then and take our rods with us."

" You don't say so?" said Sam.

" Then, evidently, I don't speak distinctly," said Billy.

" Well, I heard what you said, anyhow," said Pizzie, " and I accept the invitation. Let me see now, what day is this? Tuesday. We go with Mr. Whitcomb to the Dhu Loch the day after to-morrow."

" Marvellous calculation! You have worked it out absolutely correctly. What a brain!" said Billy. " I don't know how you do it! Oh, by the way, we have to meet Mr. Whitcomb at the hotel to-day at twelve-fifteen precisely. I almost forgot to mention it. You better go and have a wash, Sam, and as for you, Pizzie, your tie could do with a bit of adjusting. It's trying to work up round your ears. They are not being worn that way this season."

The news of the appointment was such a surprise to Sam and Pizzie they had no reply for Billy's pleasantries. They went off to make themselves presentable.

Billy was the first to arrive at the hotel. He strolled along five minutes ahead of time, and explained to Miss Dorothy Whitcomb that his chums had gone off to make " a hasty toilet ". He saw her smile at that, and wondered why. But Billy was for once in a way curiously silent. In presence of grown-ups he was frequently dumb. His

humour found no outlet, except in the merry twinkle in his eyes. He could never hide that. Mr. Whitcomb came to the hotel door just as Sam and Pizzie approached.

"Well, well!" said he, "so we meet again. Come away in and let us have a talk."

"As you are going to be talking on fishing," said Dorothy, who had been duly introduced, "I'll get on with my book. But if you want someone to work the boat on Thursday, count on me."

Sam and Pizzie set Miss Whitcomb down as "one of the best". Both agreed there was no silly nonsense about her.

Mr. Whitcomb led the way to the hotel lounge. None of the three boys was familiar with this recent oak-panelled addition to the Inverey Arms. Its luxury impressed them, but what made the place wonderful was the surprising scheme of decoration. Here in a glass case was a monster salmon, caught in the Dhu Loch by a famous angler. It had a brass plate with the name of its captor, its weight—42 lb.—the date on which it was caught, and, in the corner of the case, the fly—a "Jock Scott"—that had done the trick. There were other cases in which, in reedy and pebbly setting, trout were similarly shown, and the boys were quick to note that Mr. Whitcomb's name could be read on the tablet attached to one of these cases.

"You're looking at my trophy," said Mr. Whitcomb. "Well, he is a poor angler who boasts, and I would never have got that fish if I had not had a good boatman. It was in his honour, more than in mine, I had it set up there, and you will see his name gets the prominence it deserves. Any ordinary clumsy fellow would have lost me that fine trout, but you see I had M'Fayden, the shoemaker, rowing for me that day, and he's the finest boatman and the keenest angler in Inverey."

The boys exchanged glances when M'Fayden's name was mentioned, but said nothing. They were thinking more of what true sportsmanship Mr. Whitcomb always showed. There was no mistaking he was a real brick.

"You boys must be thirsty," he said, as he touched the bell. "I believe the ginger-pop here is unrivalled. It is what you would call 'the goods'. I confess I'm very fond of it myself."

Presently the waiter arrived with large samples of the celebrated brew, and Mr. Whitcomb dispensed it in crystal glasses in which ice tinkled and large slices of lemon floated.

"And now," he said, "we must draw up our plan of campaign for Thursday. The Dhu Loch, as you know, is reserved for visitors to the hotel, but I've arranged for us all to have a day on it. Perhaps two days if we do well, and we certainly should. The weather has been poor for the river, and its tributaries where you fish, but the loch is all right. There are some whopping big trout in it, and I am told it's hardly been fished this year. That sounds good, doesn't it?"

The boys beamed, and Billy said, "Top hole!"

"We'll fish with fly first," continued Mr. Whitcomb. "Two of us at a time. We'll take turn about. We'll get Dorothy to come along in the afternoon and bring a luncheon hamper. So that will allow us to carry on until evening. I expect to get some special artificial minnows by tomorrow's post, and mean to have a good try for a *Salmo ferox*. They fight like tigers."

Pizzie shyly suggested that neither he, Sam, nor Billy knew what a *Salmo ferox* was. Mr. Whitcomb explained.

"It is simply a huge cannibal trout. There is one of 12 lb. in a case over there.

You can take a look at it as you go out. But it's a sprat compared with the big 'un we are to fetch home on Thursday. It is high time some of the *Salmo ferox* were taken out of the Dhu Loch. They are too lazy, or too proud, to rise to the fly, and they spend their time gobbling up all the little trout. So they deserve to be punished. I've caught them in Loch Stenness, in Orkney, where they are claimed to be a distinct species only to be found in brackish water. But they are not a distinct species. I have caught them in Loch Rannoch, not very far from here, where they are thickly spotted and yellow in colour. I have caught them in Loch Awe also, where some are silvery like salmon, and that's what they are like in the Dhu Loch, as you'll see on Thursday."

" I hope we shall," said Pizzie.

" That's right," said Mr. Whitcomb. " We anglers have to keep the flag of hope flying all the time. We may lose our fish now and then, or lose our chance of getting them because the weather is against us, but we must never lose hope."

At the sound of the luncheon bell the boys rose. They declined an invitation to stay, and Mr. Whitcomb took them along to see the *Salmo ferox* in the case to which he had directed their attention earlier. A truly royal fish! Quite as good as any salmon. " And a much tougher opponent, so I'm told, and so I have found," said Mr. Whitcomb.

Pizzie, Sam, and Billy had but one topic of conversation for the rest of the day. Their interest in big cannibal trout dwarfed all other themes. By evening the possibility of such cannibals being as big as sharks was openly hinted at. By Wednesday evening Billy had declared them " as big as whales ", and announced that he was going to see if he could get a harpoon, and, failing that, he intended to go down to the pier and commandeer an anchor. " I think an anchor with fine sharp flukes, baited with salt pork, would be the very thing the doctor ordered," said he.

Thursday morning dawned at last, as Thursdays and other days have a way of doing. It was a fine, grey day, with the sun slightly overcast and with a wind just strong enough to raise an ideal ripple on the loch.

" It would have been a wash-out if it had been a flat calm," said Pizzie, when the three met.

" It would have been a judgment on us, according to Mrs. M'Fayden," said Billy.

" But not according to Mr. M'Fayden, who can catch trout in any weather," said Sam.

They found Mr. Whitcomb waiting for them at the hotel, and soon they were bowling along the wooded road that leads to the Dhu Loch. They got their first glimpse of its shining waters after crossing the Rey Bridge and covering a journey of a couple of miles that seemed but " a couple of hundred yards ", according to Billy's estimate, who afterwards described Mr. Whitcomb as " a peach of a driver ". Motoring, however, was not the day's attraction, although it was agreed it was jolly fine. They drew up beside the boathouse, and many hands made light work of unloading the astonishing amount of gear that was required for the day's sport.

The boys had brought two trout rods and tackle to serve their needs, but Mr. Whitcomb announced that his rod was at their service also. It was a perfect beauty of split cane with agate rings, through which a waterproof line of fine silk ran from a gun-metal reel of workmanlike pattern. But Pizzie's interest centred in the stout trolling rods with their huge reels.

" We hope to hear one of those reels make stirring music later on," said Mr.

Pizzie had better luck

Whitcomb. " If we get a big fellow on you will hear it sing the sweetest song an angler knows."

Billy was all for trying for a *Salmo ferox* right away, but Mr. Whitcomb, looking at the clouds, prophesied windier weather presently, and stated that when the loch was a little rougher they would stand a better chance, and meantime there were good trout rising in the shallows, and it would be a pity not to make sure of " a basket " when the chance offered.

Mr. Whitcomb and Sam took the oars and worked the boat during the first drift, during which Pizzie and Billy plied their rods and were not long before they found the trout were on the move.

" Dash it all, I missed that one!" said Billy, as a nice half-pounder rose to his bob-fly.

" You struck too quickly," said Mr. Whitcomb. " Give them time, but not too much time."

" Got him this shot," said Billy, as his line tightened and a trout bent the point of his rod. But hardly had he spoken when, with a twist and a turn on the top of the water, the fish had got away.

Pizzie, less excitable, had better luck. He was soon playing a nice half-pounder, and Mr. Whitcomb, getting the landing-net well under it as Pizzie drew it in towards him, had the fish in the boat in a trice. Billy got the next one, making no mistake.

Following this initial success, they both did well and by noon had fourteen

to their credit. Then, taking the oars, they worked the boat for Mr. Whitcomb and Sam, who, however, had to be content with ten between them, the rise of trout suddenly ceasing and a period of " nothing doing " following. One of Sam's was the best trout of the day, so far, turning the scale at well over a pound and a half.

" I thought I would never get him in," said Sam.

" Ah, he was well hooked!" said Mr. Whitcomb. " I could see that while you were playing him."

The boys were astonished at Mr. Whitcomb's keenness of sight and the splendid length of line he could throw. Every one of the six fish he raised he played to the net, never losing one.

There was no doubt now, however, that the anglers had struck a lean patch. An hour's fishing was marked by only two rises, each of which was obviously short, and the boys were delighted when a " Halloo!" from the bank announced that lunch had arrived, and that Dorothy had it waiting for them at the Green Point, in the shelter of the woods that fringe the shore of the loch there.

" Any luck?" she shouted, as their boat drew in to the shore.

" Heaps," said Billy. " We've got a couple of dozen already."

" But I don't see any sign of the *Salmo ferox*," said Dorothy, surveying the take.

" We haven't paid our afternoon call on him yet," said Mr. Whitcomb. " We are reserving that pleasure until after lunch."

Dorothy shook her head. " I am doubtful, very doubtful if he'll be at home," said she. " However, I don't want to be a spoil-sport. Come away and feed, you hungry fellows. You ought to be very grateful to me for bringing you a meal."

" But how did you get the hamper here?" asked Pizzie.

" Ah!" said Dorothy. " I came along in true country fashion on the carrier's cart. He dropped me at the boathouse and brought the hamper over here for me."

In the list of wonderful luncheon parties that have been held under the canopy of heaven on a day when the scent of the pine-woods was rich in the air, and it was good to be out of doors, there is none in the memory of Pizzie, Sam, and Billy can touch the luncheon that day on the shores of the Dhu Loch. It was not the food, although that was delicious; it was not the ginger-pop that foamed in horn tumblers —it was the company. Mr. Whitcomb was a boy again among the boys, while as for Dorothy, she kept on insisting: " You've not had half enough yet," until all were laughing heartily.

" Now for the *Salmo ferox*," said Mr. Whitcomb, when the remains of the feast and the last of the empty ginger-pop bottles had been stowed in the hamper and carried to the motor-car.

" Sorry I can't stay with you," said Dorothy, " but you men are best left to yourselves on a job of this kind. I'm walking back to Inverey, where I shall have a quiet cup of tea, read a good book, and forget about all of you. Shall I tell them to send up a van for the *Salmo ferox*?"

" I think not," said Mr. Whitcomb, " we intend to tie it to a pole and carry it on the shoulders of two of our young giants here; we'll make a triumphal return to Inverey."

Having seen Dorothy on her homeward way, the anglers launched their boat once more, with the trolling rods in the stern. When deep water had been reached the long lines, with phantom minnows attached, were paid out and checked at the reels when Mr. Whitcomb gave the word.

" That is enough," he said; " the little red worsted mark on each of the lines is the indication of how many yards distant the

The *Salmo ferox* struggled in vain

minnows are spinning in the track of the boat. All we have to do now is to keep rowing and wait for something to happen."

Sam and Pizzie were rowing and Mr. Whitcomb set the course. The wind had risen slightly and with it came a sharp rain shower. The change in the weather that had been prophesied earlier was on them, but it brought no sign of fish. Mr. Whitcomb and Billy next took a turn at the oars without any better luck, and there was general agreement that trolling was a stale business when compared with fly-fishing.

" If it were not that this is the only way we have a chance of getting a big cannibal trout I should not be trying it," said Mr. Whitcomb, and as if in reply to his words the great wonder happened. The reel on the inshore rod suddenly sang out, and the point bent like a bow.

" Whirr!" went the line as Pizzie gripped the rod. " Whirr-r-r-r!" and away behind the boat a huge fish leapt into the air.

" Keep your fingers off the line," shouted Mr. Whitcomb, " or you'll get them cut. Reel him in smartly and keep him tight."

Again the fish leapt into the air, but this time a little nearer the boat. " Give him his head," said Mr. Whitcomb. " There's plenty of fight in him. Don't hurry him."

The *Salmo ferox*, for there was no mistaking what it was, was swimming about fifteen yards from the boat in a circling movement, and every now and then diving in an endeavour to get free. Gradually he tired and the boys' hopes rose as Mr. Whitcomb got the gaff ready, but at the sight of net and gaff the *Salmo ferox* went off at the run, and had to be brought back again resolutely. Still he was not mastered. The boat was now swinging towards the reedy bed of the loch at the Green Point Island, for the wind had risen higher and rowing was now extremely difficult.

" It is no easy matter bringing him in when the loch is so rough as it is now," said Mr. Whitcomb, " but if you hold on and keep him tight we can steer him out from where the reeds are, for if he gets in there he'll twist the cast round them and get off for a certainty, shallow and all though the water is."

Pizzie kept his capture on a taut line, but try as he did with Mr. Whitcomb's assistance at the oars—for Mr. Whitcomb was now rowing with the two oars—the *Salmo ferox* was still resisting all effort. A gust of wind made the boat heel over, and the reedy stretch was now too near to be comfortable for Pizzie.

Another leap, another rush, another " whirr-r-r-r " of the reel and the *Salmo ferox* was in among the reeds, splashing in the shallow water, but hung up by the line and unable to get clear again into the deeps.

" What am I to do now," said Pizzie.

" There's nothing you can do," said Mr. Whitcomb. " Your line is all tangled among the reeds, your fish is either there or away by this time. No, look! There he is still splashing. But what can we do?"

" Please hold the rod, Mr. Whitcomb," said Pizzie. " No, you can't, you are rowing, but Sam can. You hold it, Sam. Now then, Billy, the big fish is still in the shallows and still held by our line and trace; are you game to get it? It's you and me for it."

" Good egg," said Billy. " I'm with you."

" The boat would frighten him," said Mr. Whitcomb, " but I'll take you in a little bit, and then you can get into the loch and go after him. Take the gaff and net with you. It's our only hope."

Mr. Whitcomb rowed to within waist-depth of the reeds, and Pizzy and Billy were in the water in a jiffy.

" Crikey, it's cold!" said Billy.

" Never mind," said Pizzie, who had the

big landing net. 'There will be warm work in a minute."

"Where is he?" said Billy, who had the gaff.

"Wait till he splashes again," said Pizzie. "There, look!"

The boys were now among the reeds, but found it hard to get a proper footing on the soft muddy bottom. But they could see where the *Salmo ferox* was circling at the end of a short, tangled line.

Billy made a snatch at him with the gaff and missed him; Pizzie had him half into the landing-net when he escaped again.

"Keep cool," shouted Mr. Whitcomb from the boat. "Don't be in such a hurry. Get behind him and drive him in towards the shore."

Pizzie and Billy got behind him and saw him swim forward still farther into the shallows. These were not to his liking. He turned on his tracks and cut across in front of Billy, then back again to where Pizzie was.

He looked to be a fish of about fourteen pounds, and was silvery as a salmon.

Back he went in Billy's direction as Pizzie made a thrust at him with the net. "Catch him! Oh catch him, Billy!" cried Pizzie.

"That's what I've been trying to do all afternoon," said Billy. "Get him in between these two big stones and we'll nab him."

Herding him by splashing the water, they got him into one-foot depth between the stones and saw him turn on his side. He was weakening in endeavour, but could not be counted as caught even yet.

"It's now or never," shouted Pizzie. "You get his tail, Billy, and I'll grip him by the back. Now!"

Both boys flung themselves on the fish, heeding naught of either gaff or landing-net, which they had flung ashore. The *Salmo ferox* struggled in vain. Pizzie and Billy together held him as in a vice, and as they carried him on to the Green Point Island Mr. Whitcomb and Sam shouted "Well done!" from the boat. It was lucky they had him held tight, for the gut trace had snapped as they took him ashore.

"We're a bit wet," said Pizzie.

"I haven't a dry stitch on me," said Billy, "except a stitch in my side that I got through the excitement chasing about."

They stood there dripping with the *Salmo ferox* in the grass at their feet, and Mr. Whitcomb brought in the boat, and with Sam was soon beside them.

"Fifteen pounds and a quarter," he said as he held it dangling from the steel spring balance that had weighed many just such a fine fish. "I guess the little trout in the loch would be glad to know of the end of this cannibal. So into the boat with him, and we'll get you boys home for a change of togs."

The run home was a run of sheer delight, and when Dorothy, meeting them at the hotel, asked, "How ever did you manage to catch such a monster?" Billy replied, "We guddled it."

And that was true, in a sense, for in Scotland when boys go trouting in small streams and are adept in catching fish by gripping them under stones in shallow water, that is what is known as "guddling".

But the guddling of a *Salmo ferox* of over fifteen pounds ranks unquestionably as the greatest guddling triumph on record.

Speed and Power

How to get the most from the Motor-cycle

By George H. Cutbush

Editor, *Motor World*

All keen motor-cyclists take a pride in maintaining the efficiency of their machines. Many, however, like to have their mount in the very pink of condition—not only efficient, but just a little more efficient than the majority.

This means time and care, but there is ample reward when the machine romps away from others on hills, or holds its own with more powerful motor-cycles on the level. Nor does a well-tuned mount tempt its rider to speed all the time, for there is a real pleasure in sitting astride a motor-cycle at the top of its form even if it is not given its head. There is a feeling of reserve power, and the instant response when the throttle is opened to take advantage of an opening in traffic, or to show how a hill should be taken, is a constant delight.

Of course the tuning up of an engine for serious speed work has become something of a science, and is beyond the resources of the average amateur. Moreover, such tune cannot be retained for long, and necessitates alterations that make the engine less suitable for ordinary work and far more liable to give trouble.

Thus special aluminium pistons may be used, or all but a single piston ring dispensed with. The valve springs may be replaced by stronger ones, and special cams may be fitted; but, as none of these is employed on the makers' standard touring models, it may be taken that such alterations do not make for a more durable or comfortable machine.

This little chat on efficiency is therefore rather intended for those who desire to make the best of their touring mounts. After all, if speed and speed only is wanted, it is possible to buy sporting machines with a guarantee of anything up to seventy miles an hour, without needing to spend time and money on transforming a standard machine.

Nor in increasing the efficiency of the standard machine need we shorten its life or render it less pleasant to drive. Many little things that we can do really help the engine to do its work with less effort, and others are in the nature of finishing touches that are not quite practicable for the maker, who has to produce his machine at a certain cost.

Thus it is possible materially to increase the power of the engine by giving the gases the very easiest possible passage into and out of the cylinder.

The interior of no casting is perfectly smooth, and if valve pockets, ports, and cylinder heads are filed and polished with emery, the smooth surfaces will allow a bigger charge to be drawn through in the same time.

Thus early the reader might be reminded,

however, that it is useless to give all his attention to the engine. If the frame is not true, the sprockets worn, and the wheel bearings in poor condition, it is little use tuning up the engine until all these things are put right.

Yet too often the engine gets all the attention, and the cycle and transmission very little.

See therefore that the frame is true and the wheels in track, that the spokes are properly tensioned, and that the bearings are in good condition. Whether all chain or chain and belt transmission is used the gear-box must be absolutely in line, and the chains and belt must be running straight and at just the right tension.

The gear-box must not be filled with grease if it should contain oil, and the oil should occasionally be drained off and the box washed out with paraffin before it is replenished.

Returning to the engine, the importance of good compression may be emphasized. Compression pressures vary with different engines, and because one engine takes more getting over compression than another, need not mean that its compression is better.

The important thing is to prevent either the compressed gases or the working gases under the pressure of ignition escaping. The points where the gases can escape are of course past the piston, the valves, or the valve caps and sparking plugs.

The piston is supposed to be kept gas-tight by means of piston rings, and there is no difficulty in securing this, as for racing, &c., it is a very common practice to employ but a single top ring so as to reduce friction. If the one ring is well fitted it will give all that is wanted for the time being. Piston rings should be renewed from time to time as they lose their spring, while the groove in which they fit requires cleaning, and sometimes it will be found that the groove is worn tapered, when it should be turned out true in a lathe.

Valve caps and sparking plugs can be tested for tightness by smearing oil round them and watching for bubbles when the engine is running. The valves should be ground in, of course, to secure a perfect seat, but care should be taken not to overdo this grinding, else the valve will in time drop lower in the seating and reduce the available area for the gases to enter or leave. To eliminate this pocketing, valve and seat should occasionally be trued up with a valve-seating tool.

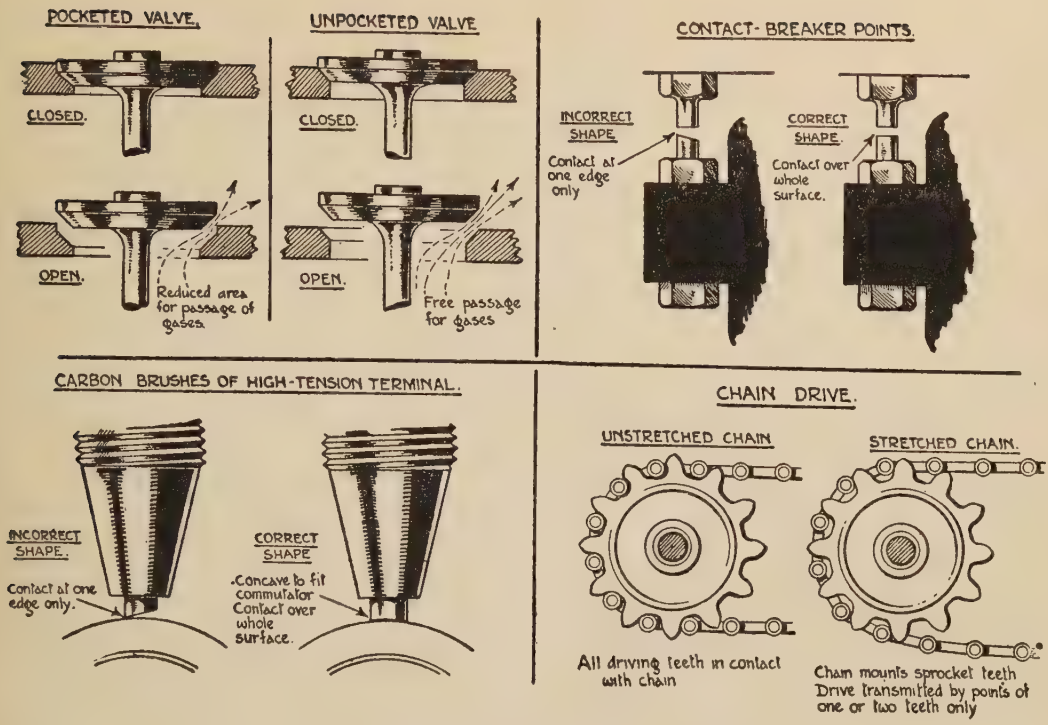
Leaky valve stems do not affect compression, but they can cause difficult starting and bad running at low speeds owing to the entrance of air on the induction stroke, thus giving a weak mixture. Valve stems should therefore be a good fit in the guides, and whenever removed should be rubbed with graphite before replacing.

Stronger valve springs than standard can sometimes be fitted with advantage, but if too strong there will be excessive wear on all the valve mechanism from the seats to the cams. To lengthen the life of the spring it is a good tip to fit an asbestos washer between spring and guide.

The compression may be experimented with by using specially made valve caps giving a little more or a little less compression space.

Naturally all such parts as big ends and gudgeon pins, &c., must be in good condition, and it is useless trying to get more than the normal power unless these important details are just right, and nicely run in.

At this point the reader may be reminded that after any renewals the engine should be run carefully for a while. Bearings should be left a trifle on the tight side, given adequate lubrication, and then carefully run in so that a hard skin is obtained that will reduce friction and stand



Details worth noting

up to hard wear. If the engine is to be run hard immediately after any rebushing, then the bearings must be left on the slack side, else there will be early disaster.

As regards carburettors, a larger jet may be used if power is regarded as more important than economy, but there is nothing to be gained by fitting a jet too big, as this will result in an insufficiency of air. All through the carburettor and inlet system surfaces should be made as smooth as possible, and all corners rounded off to reduce friction between the gas and the gas passages, as we have said before.

The magneto, if chain driven, should have its chain with only the slightest slack on the idle side. The contact breaker points and the high-tension carbon brushes should all be trued up, the former dead flat, and the latter should be just a little hollow to bear easily on the slip-ring.

So many engines will run all day with spark fully advanced, that to get the utmost efficiency it is generally safe to advance the ignition a trifle, although naturally the rider must then be willing to make an intelligent use of the ignition lever. To carry out a slight advance is an easy enough matter, but before slackening off the magneto sprocket its exact position in relation to the armature shaft should be noted, so that the original setting can be found again, if necessary, without trouble. Move the armature spindle forward not more than half a tooth to start with and try the effect, not forgetting to retard the spark at starting.

As regards the valve timing there is not generally much scope for improvement with

standard cams, but as an experiment the effect of opening the exhaust a tooth earlier may be tried, and also of opening the inlet a tooth later. These settings should be tried together and separately, but if there is no appreciable difference the original timing should be at once reverted to, which, of course, is quite simple, as the timing gears are nowadays always marked so that with the marks brought together the timing is as the makers consider best.

The question of valve-stem clearance has not been mentioned, but it should be borne in mind that the less clearance the bigger the valve opening. At the same time it is essential that the valve should shut completely, hence the final adjustment of the tappets should be made with the engine really hot. Even then the inlet tappet may be adjusted a shade closer than the exhaust.

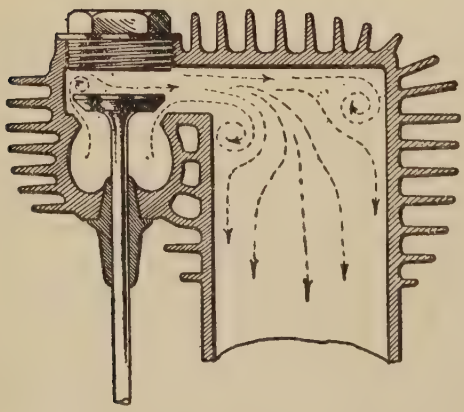
Finally we come to the question of gear ratios. It is not enough to have the engine developing its maximum power—we must see that this power is applied to the best advantage.

There is in the case of every engine a certain speed at which maximum power is developed. It may be possible to attain a higher speed, but the power will not increase for the simple reason that the gases cannot be got in and out of the cylinder quickly enough. Hence the importance of easy gas-ways, smooth passages, fuel-valve openings, &c., and the common use of overhead valves for sporting engines. Of course a good touring engine will develop its power over a fairly wide range of speed, and its most efficient speed will be attained gradually, and power will fall off but slowly as the speed goes higher.

With an engine tuned for sheer power the speed at which the highest power is attained is more sharply defined, and hence it is the more necessary to have gear ratios that will enable the engine to maintain that speed.

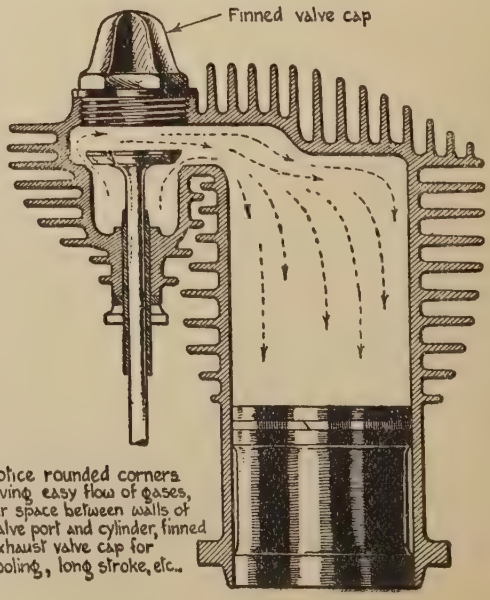
Of course the gear that allows an infinite

DIAGRAM SHOWING EFFECT OF SHARP CORNERS.



Sharp corners create eddies causing loss of power and local heating

EXAMPLE OF EFFICIENT MODERN ENGINE.



Notice rounded corners giving easy flow of gases, air space between walls of valve port and cylinder, finned exhaust valve cap for cooling, long stroke, etc.

range of gears between its limits is ideal, but in practice a gear-box with three fixed ratios is the general rule. The ordinary owner cannot very well change the actual ratio, but he can vary them all by the use of different sized sprockets and chain wheels for the transmission.

The great thing to remember is not to gear too high. If the gear is a little too low the engine can still maintain its maximum revolutions, and will have the better acceleration, but in competitions the gear ratio must be determined by taking all the factors into account.

In a hill-climb it must be decided which gear will be that used for the major portion of the climb, and the ratio must then be adjusted to allow the engine to maintain its full speed on that gear. The same applies, of course, to speed on the flat, where the gear used will be the top.

Finally the best petrol should be used and carefully strained. Similarly the best possible lubricant should be used, but for a single ascent of a hill or a speed burst over a short distance it is not necessary to flood the engine with oil; indeed many successful riders reduce the oil level in the crank-case so as to reduce the drag caused by the flywheels dipping too deeply into the oil.

For tests of reliability the engine need not be tuned to its limit, and in the actual event it should always be driven with plenty in hand. Also all unknown hills and doubtful corners should be taken cautiously, and if there is any doubt a lower gear should be engaged in good time. Crack riders provide plenty of chances for novices to do better by attempting the spectacular and being unable to change down at the critical moment, or else being unable to get round a bend by tackling it too fast.

In such trials much depends upon the tyres, and these should be in good condition, not too much worn and without any open cuts. Every nut on the machine should be gone over. Petrol and oil-pipes may be taped with insulating tape to render fracture by vibration less likely. Every part should be well lubricated, engine and gear-box cleaned out and replenished.

It will be seen then that success in competition, as in most other things, can only be obtained by close attention to details. " Many a mickle maks a muckle " we are told, and it is in the combined effect of detail adjustment that motor-cycle efficiency is attained. The special machine with special engine, lightened piston, racing cams, &c., may be an object of envy, but it may quite well be beaten by a standard machine, the owner of which has striven after perfection in detail.

And finally, if you secure speed do not be always seeking to prove it. There is pleasure in its possession as well as in its occasional indulgence, and the real speed man only lets his machine out when the road is open and there is no risk of causing inconvenience.

Speed in the right place and at the right time is safe and exhilarating, and the obtaining of it develops patience and ingenuity.

A Prince in Peril

A TALE OF ANCIENT EGYPT

By Donald A. Mackenzie

I. THE JOURNEY TO MEMPHIS

All night long the caravan of Midianite traders had trudged across the sandy desert of Sinai, bound for Egypt and guided by the stars. Slaves on foot were driving heavily laden asses, while Ehi, the old sheik, and his fighting men, mounted on sullen but nimble horses, kept a constant look-out for those fierce robber bands that lie in wait to plunder merchants of their wares and animals. All felt grimy and uncomfortable, for the prickly sand tortured their skins, and they were wearied and parched with thirst. The morning star had risen to herald the dawn. Then suddenly, and as full of delight as the first call of an awakened bird, the sound of gurgling water came through the darkness. No sweeter music is ever heard by travellers in that desolate land. It broke the spell of silence and weariness. Men and beasts were moved as if by magic to fresh activity, realizing that their sufferings were near an end.

" The Nile, the Nile!" someone cried out hoarsely. " Blessed is the Nile of Egypt!"

The animals were sniffing water on the wind of dawn, and snorting and braying, while horsemen and slaves drew deep breaths of the cooler air.

" The Nile, the Nile!" ran the whisper through the caravan.

Glad shouts came through the darkness, as the scouts in front came upon a generous rivulet that tumbled over the sand from a rift in an embankment. They slipped from their saddles, threw themselves flat on the desert, and drank the cool, refreshing water. As others came up they splashed through the wandering stream and again raised glad shouts, for, at but a short distance beyond, they discovered a deep pool that had collected in a limestone hollow, and lay black and smooth as polished ebony, gemmed with bright reflected stars. The men plunged into its depths, while others, following the rivulet, reached a branch stream of the Nile and drank and bathed with rapturous joy. Horses waded into the water, but the asses, glad as they seemed to drink, were less willing to wet their bodies.

" Beware of the crocodile!" shouted the elderly sheik, who had waded across the Delta stream and stood on a bare ridge of limestone, sharply outlined against the starry sky. He was answered by defiant shouts, for his men were loth to leave the water, but one slave, a slim, tall youth of noble bearing, came out quickly and stood nigh to him, clutching the reins of a snorting ass which he had urged to come across.

" You are wise, Joseph," grunted the sheik. " Egypt is a goodly land, possessing much that is desired by the heart of man, but the crocodiles are to be feared. Now that the Nile is in full flood and scatters

itself in countless streams over the desert, these fierce monsters prowl hither and thither, far and near, seeking their prey. At any moment one may dart forth suddenly and seize man or beast."

Again the old man shouted: " Beware of the crocodile!"

Joseph watched the men and animals coming confusedly across the stream in the growing light. But, although all were elated and refreshed and the air was filled with their shouts and laughter, his face was sad, for his heart seemed heavy as a stone. It was sorrowful to him to be a slave—sorrowful to have been torn away from his father Jacob. The thought of his parent's grief was like a thorn in his flesh.

" Sit down and rest," urged the sheik softly, " while I round up the stragglers with my lash."

As he spoke he leapt on his horse. In another moment he went dashing across the stream, his shrill voice rising clear above the clamour.

Joseph gazed with heavy eyes towards the dusky stretches of desert that lay between him and his father's distant tents. The dawn was brightening slowly. A long shaft of vivid green light had appeared in the sky, wavering as does the first venturous flame of a freshly kindled fire and growing larger and more luminous. Then a blot of golden light appeared beneath it, spreading out gradually like an unfolding fan until, with a sudden flash of splendour, the sun rose up red as blood above the horizon. The desert was immediately transformed. Its low, clinging haze became suffused with wondrous beauty, glinting all the luminous and elusive tints of mother-of-pearl. The wide wastes of sand then seemed to be a gorgeous Paradise with blossoming groves and sapphire streams and lakes of silver.

Joseph had, however, become accustomed to these deceptions of the desert of Sinai, and turned away his eyes from its unsubstantial beauties. He looked towards Egypt where no mirage confused the senses. The streams of the Nile, which interlaced the Delta region at that season of inundation, were reddening in the morning rays; the sky was ablaze with crimson and gold, and the distant hills were variously tinted in shades of violet and grey and rich murex purple.

The old sheik was urging his men forward, and, when he had the whole caravan moving in order again, he rode for a short distance beside Joseph.

" If you were some years older, son of Jacob," said he, " I should keep you for myself, but you are too gentle for the desert and more suited for life in Egypt. I love you for your obedience. Alone in all this caravan you have carried out my instructions. I have never had to shout twice to you."

" Take me home again," Joseph pleaded. " Leave me not in Egypt. My father Jacob has great flocks and herds and will give you a rich reward."

The sheik smiled grimly and stroked his long white beard. " You cost me but a few pieces of silver," said he. " In Memphis I shall sell you for gold. Your price is far beyond what your father Jacob can pay for you. These rich Egyptian lords greatly favour young slaves from Canaan, especially if they be comely as you are."

Joseph hung his head and tears streamed from his eyes.

" Sorrow not," the sheik said softly. " Know you not what I mean when I say you will be bought with gold? None but a rich man can purchase you. Think of that! No longer will you have to shelter in a tent and sleep on the bare sand. You shall live in a great house and have each night a luxurious bed. You will mix with

great men who have riches and power. No care will ever oppress your heart. No danger will ever threaten you. You will never be athirst and hungry."

But Joseph refused to be comforted. "Dear to me," he moaned, "are my own people and my native land."

"Drive on the asses to yonder fort," said the sheik abruptly, after a pause, and then fell back to shout orders to his men.

The caravan halted outside the high brick walls of the Egyptian frontier stronghold, and the captain of the guard came out with a small force of armed men to question the strangers.

"Ho! who comes hither?" the captain demanded. His face was stern and hard; his eyes flashed fire.

The sheik returned to the spot at which Joseph had halted, but, ere he could speak, the captain drew his sword and said angrily: "You are spies and dare not pass!"

"Well you know me, O mighty captain of the Pharaoh," protested the sheik, who had dismounted and made obeisance before the Egyptian. "I am no other than your humble servant, Ehi, the merchant, who has returned to do business in Memphis."

"Your name is strange to me. I cannot permit you to pass," the Egyptian frowned. He wrinkled his eyes and peered through the lashes. One might imagine he had never cast eyes on Ehi before.

"Here," said the sheik, "is an ass laden with goodly things to recall me, your servant Ehi, to your gracious memory. I have brought you once again vessels of silver from Syria, and from Canaan almonds and balm and spices and myrrh and pots of honey, and sweet oil of the olives with

"You are spies, and dare not pass!"

which to anoint your head when the heat is great. I pray you to accept these remembrances of your former favours and permit your servant Ehi to pass on."

The Egyptian captain smiled. "When my scribe has taken down the names of all your men, it may be," he said, "that you will be permitted to go farther into Egypt."

"Your servant Ehi will bless you all his days," the sheik declared with fervour.

"And if you bring me wine from Memphis," smiled the other, "I may remember you when you return rich in Egyptian gold."

The sheik made obeisance again, but, as he turned away, he muttered evil things through his beard regarding the thieving officials of the Pharaoh.

When the caravan resumed its journey, Ehi had forgotten to be kind to Joseph and snarled at him as at the others. It was not until the sun had risen high and the frontier fort had been left far behind, that a halt was called. Then the camp was pitched on the bank of a branch stream of the Nile and in the shade of a sycamore grove. Joseph had fed and watered his asses, and, having partaken of food, lay down to sleep under an awning until the cool of evening. The journey was then resumed.

All that night and for the greater part of next day the caravan moved southward. Then it was no longer possible to travel by night, so great and extensive were the floods. Joseph was fascinated by the wonders of Egypt. One evening the caravan reached a point which commanded a wide view of the mountain-fringed valley. The inundation was at its height. Great stretches of cool green water spread over the sands.

"All Egypt has become a sea!" exclaimed the sheik.

Joseph gazed about him with sparkling eyes. He saw numerous islands formed by little villages of mud houses, from which children ran to gambol in the waters while their fathers waded out to net fish escaped from the Nile. River-side villas, with their gardens adorned by clumps of sycamore and date trees, were completely isolated and could be reached only by boat. Here and there groups of black oxen stood knee-deep in water, gazing solemnly at passers-by and lashing their bodies with dripping tails to scatter clouds of buzzing flies. Flocks of birds rose from the Nile, disturbed by passing ships and barges, and men in small papyri canoes, bobbing on the waves, made sport by attacking wild ducks and geese with throw-sticks and bows and arrows. The great ships—sailing up the Nile with wide high sails to catch the gentle north wind, and drifting down it with flashing oars—were a source of constant interest to Joseph.

Next morning the caravan was greatly excited by the loss of an ass's foal. The young animal had run down to drink at the river-side when it was seized by a crocodile. A Midianite cast a spear, but it glanced from the reptile's mailed back, as it might from a rock, and the bronze head snapped from the shaft and sank.

"Did I not warn you?" shouted the sheik, as he ran forward to whip the slave who had had care of the foal. "Fool!" he bellowed, between the lashes he laid on the youth's back; "would it had been yourself the crocodile had taken."

"I saw a child seized once," a Midianite said to Joseph, as they moved on again, "but her faithful mother rescued her. She leapt at the crocodile and thrust her thumbs into its eyes, and the monster dropped the child and dived into the Nile."

"A traveller's tale!" grunted the sheik, who had come alongside.

"I swear by my father's head, I tell the truth. An Egyptian who witnessed the mother's act informed me of it."

"All Egyptians are liars," the shiek com-

mented. " I knew that you repeated but an idle tale. At first you said that you yourself had seen this crocodile-fighting woman."

" But——" the Midianite protested, ready to defend his informant's story.

" This is no time for foolish chatter," interrupted the sheik. " We must needs cross the river, for yonder is Memphis."

Joseph cried out with astonishment when he gazed southward towards the white walls of the distant capital. He caught his first glimpse of the pyramids. They stood sharply outlined against the sky, and in the luminous morning air resembled wedges of burnished gold. Streaks of silvery light flashed across their clear images on the level waters.

" What are these?" cried Joseph. The pyramids seemed to him to be mountains of gold.

" The tombs of mighty Pharaohs," answered the sheik softly. " There they sleep well beneath these mountains built by man."

Two Egyptian barges conveyed the caravan across the Nile towards the narrow elevated road that led to Memphis. Joseph trembled with fear as he entered the first barge with the sheik, fearing it would sink. The reluctant asses were shipped on board, some of them having to be blindfolded.

" The sons of the desert and the beasts of the desert have no love for ships," muttered the sheik, as he sat down beneath an awning. Joseph lay on the deck with closed eyes until the river was crossed. He was glad when they had landed to set foot on dry land again.

The journey to Memphis was made along a crowded highway. Many merchants were hastening to the market-place of the capital — red-skinned Egyptians, sun-browned Semites, and the fairer Libyans, some of whom had copper-red beards and sea-grey eyes. Occasionally the caravans halted to make way for the great Egyptian lords who swept past in two-horse chariots. A strange ship on the river with cross-yards and two masts attracted the attention of the travellers. " She comes from Crete," an Egyptian informed Ehi, in answer to his query, " and Crete is an island far across the Green Ocean (Mediterranean) towards the north."

Even more wonderful to Joseph than the ships and the pyramids was the great city of Memphis, which the Egyptians knew as " White Walls ". Endless seemed its narrow streets with their mud and brick houses, marvellous its palaces and temples, and countless as bees its swarming inhabitants.

When the young Hebrew had reached the wide market-place, the clamour of tongues deafened his ears. Men and women conversed rapidly in strange languages, laughing, quarrelling, and shouting over wares and slaves. The sheik was constantly engaged in hot dispute with bright-eyed Egyptians who came to bargain with him. Time and again he pointed to Joseph, talking loudly and rapidly, and at length about midday he accepted a bag of gold, and, addressing Jacob's son, said softly: " Now, we must part. I have sold you to the steward of one of Egypt's greatest lords, who is named Potiphar, and is a captain of Pharaoh's guard. Could I have done better for you? I bid you a sorrowful farewell. When you become a steward yourself, I pray you not to forget Ehi, the Midianite. Farewell, Joseph, farewell!"

The young man parted from the sheik in tears. He realized that his last hope of returning home had vanished, and his heart was plunged in despair.

A young Egyptian led him to the river-side, and once again Joseph entered a ship. It was a vessel of great beauty, and, when it left the quay and was rowed smoothly down the Nile, his fears began to vanish, and he gazed about him with wondering

eyes. The sun was setting when he reached Potiphar's house, which, with another house and two great gardens, formed an island on an elevated shelf of land not far from the left bank of the Nile.

II. PRINCE RAMESES

It was soon after the flood had retreated, and the River Nile flowed once again between green fields and fruitful groves, that Joseph made acquaintance with Suti, a blind Syrian boy, who served in the great house adjoining Potiphar's. Suti was a harper and his master was a young prince, named Rameses, son of Seti II, the reigning Pharaoh. The two slaves had many secret meetings, after darkness fell, in the gardens between the houses. Suti gave Joseph instruction in the Egyptian language. "But do not speak it," said he, "lest Potiphar should sell you to a harder master. It is because you are a foreigner that you have been chosen to be his cupbearer."

"He has forbidden me and the other slaves from Canaan and Syria to learn the Egyptian language. Why should Egyptian be a forbidden tongue in an Egyptian's house?"

"Potiphar does not wish you to understand what he and his guests say in conversation," Suti said. "He is the guardian of Prince Rameses, and he fears lest anyone should communicate with his enemies. The life of my master is in constant peril."

"He has enemies?'

"Yes, he has enemies."

"Who are they?" asked Joseph, with wonder.

"Ah! that he knows not for certain. Perhaps they are among the great lords who visit Potiphar. It is the prince's secret desire to discover who are his friends and who are his foes, and you can help him."

"I? Alas! Suti, I am but a slave."

"Promise me, Joseph, that you will serve the prince by warning him of any danger that may threaten his life."

"I promise, Suti. But what danger can come nigh the son of Pharaoh?"

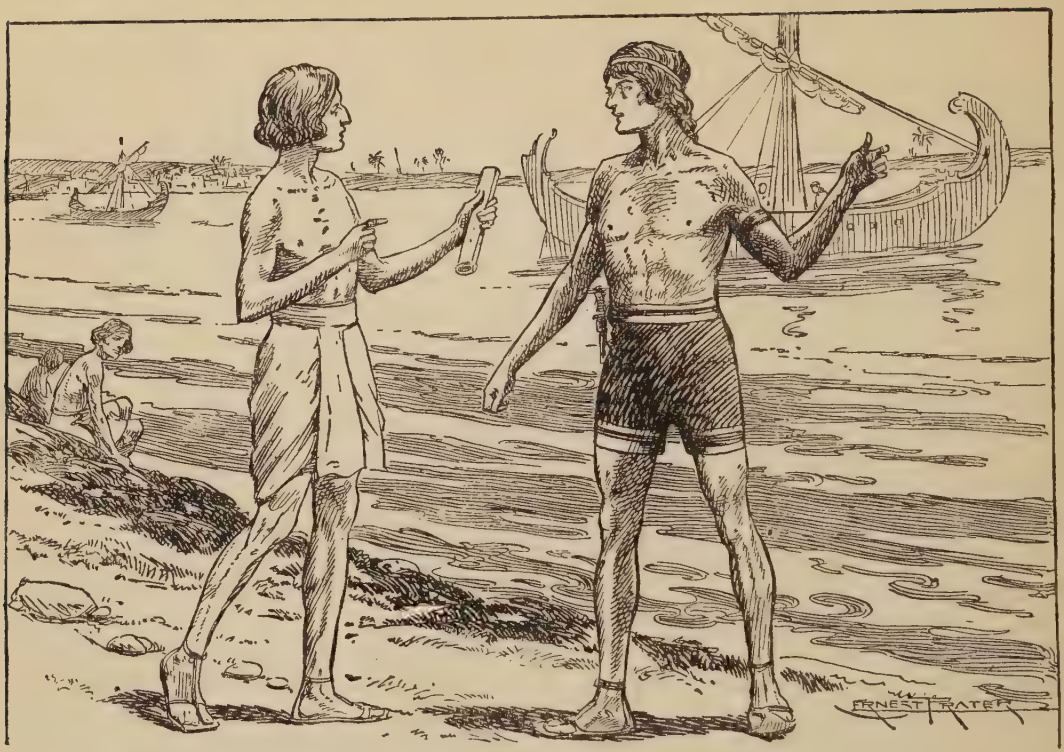
"At his birth," the blind slave explained, "it was revealed that Rameses' life would be in constant peril until he had reached his twentieth year. 'If he must die,' a prophetess foretold, 'he will die either by a crocodile or by a snake. If he escapes his doom, and reaches his twentieth year, he will live to a great age and become a mighty ruler.' Rameses is now seventeen years old. He has lived ever since childhood closely guarded here by Potiphar and his guard. He cannot leave the grounds lest his doom should overtake him. Of late he has been greatly troubled by dreams, and fears that danger is at hand."

"Alas, for the prince!" sighed Joseph, whose heart went out to a fellow-sufferer in captivity.

"Prince Rameses envies the slaves who move freely hither and thither," Suti continued. "He envies the fishermen who catch fish in sight of him; he envies the sailors who move up and down the river; he envies me even. Last evening he said: 'Suti, I should rather be blind as you are, if only I could be free, than remain any longer in this my prison house.' He often weeps, his voice is always sad. Nothing comforts him except the music of my harp."

"Would I could do aught to bring him joy!" Joseph murmured.

"Listen, and serve the prince," whispered Suti. "Rameses, as I have told you, has fears of treachery. He has been warned in his dreams. It is the Pharaoh's wish that my prince should become his successor. There are those, however, who would have another son of Pharaoh's proclaimed as Crown Prince, because he is as clay in a



Joseph and the Cretan sailor

potter's hands and would yield to their will. Such men would fain have Rameses put to death. Listen, Joseph, to all you hear, and serve my prince."

Joseph promised to be the faithful slave of Rameses. In a few months he acquired, under Suti's tuition, so excellent a knowledge of the Egyptian language that he could understand all that was said by Potiphar and his friends. But he kept his knowledge secret, and no one suspected him, which was well, for the time for him to help the prince was nigh at hand.

III. THE PLOT AGAINST RAMESES

The meetings of Suti and Joseph became more frequent during the harvest season, when the rich yellow crops of Egypt were garnered in burning sunshine. Egypt grew languid in the increasing heat. Men and animals slumbered by day: on the river the traffic was carried on at early morning and late evening, or during the night. The oars grew so hot that they blistered the hands of the rowers. In the hazy dazzling sky the sun blazed fiercely, and the eyes of men and beasts were tortured by the dazzling glare of the desert and the flashing of sunbeams on the river.

It was the season of the Low Nile, when for fifty days hot and blistering winds blow from the south and sand-storms are frequent. Joseph had never experienced such terrible sandstorms. They blotted out the blue heaven like black smoke, and roared down the valley, driving dense clouds of stinging sands over fields and rivers. The

sand spread everywhere; men and beasts found it even in their food; it grated on their teeth as they chewed. Every green thing was covered with the yellow sand, until Egypt seemed to be as bleak as the desert of Sinai.

The river shrank daily until it seemed even to hesitate to move. When, after a sandstorm had passed, a grain-laden boat came slowly down-stream at evening, the look-out at the bow constantly sounded the channel with his long pole. Occasionally a boat ran aground; its crew had then to leap out into the shallows and thrust it back into deeper water. In front of Potiphar's house a Cretan vessel, which had come down the river before a brisk wind in the darkness, had been so firmly grounded on a sand-bank that all efforts to move it had proved fruitless. The crew could do no more than drench its blistering deck and hull with water drawn from the Nile. Fortunately for the foreigners, the hot season was almost ended when this mishap occurred.

Joseph sat on the roof of Potiphar's house one evening watching the Cretans at work. They seemed to fear that no pitch would be left in the seams. But the air had grown cooler, for the north wind had already begun to blow and was awakening Egypt from its desert sleep by clearing the sand from vegetation, so that the green leaves appeared again. Potiphar and two great Egyptian lords from distant Thebes sat beneath an awning to " smell the air ". When his master smote his hands, Joseph hastened to pour out wine from a long Cretan jar.

" Thebes," said one of the lords, " burns like a potter's furnace. It is possible to breathe comfortably here."

As he spoke a puff of cool wind made the awning flap like a flag. He drew a deep breath and sighed. " The air of life comes from the north," said he.

He looked towards the other house and caught sight of Prince Rameses, who had come out to sit on the roof. Beside him Suti was kneeling as he fingered his harp and sang his song to the north wind:

" Ye damsels of Memphis, dance in the twilight!
Cool is the north wind that blows from the sea.
Yonder the star of the goddess is gleaming,
Fallen her tear that the river may rise.
Oh! the river will rise to the call of the north wind,
Cool as the wind the cool flood will be."

" The prince has long escaped his doom," said the elder of the Theban lords, " but it has been prophesied that he will die soon."

" If he should live, an end will come to all our hopes," the other remarked sourly, as Joseph filled his wine-cup of silver.

" I cannot break my oath," Potiphar replied. " I can take no part in your plot."

" Hush!" the first lord warned him. " Your slave may hear too much."

" He does not understand." Potiphar smiled as Joseph withdrew and sat down again to watch the Cretan sailors.

" 'Tis well," said the other Theban, " for, if the Pharaoh suspected us, we should be thrown to the crocodiles."

" It is His Majesty's desire that Rameses should be proclaimed Crown Prince," Potiphar said, after a pause. " Of late the guard has been strengthened. It is no longer possible to waylay the youth."

" A snake obeys no law," the elder Theban remarked.

" What mean you?" asked Potiphar, with astonished voice.

" In the prince's bedroom," the other said, " are his pet birds. He sleeps beneath their cages, and one awakes him at dawn, leaving the cage and hopping over his head."

Potiphar nodded. "That is true," he smiled.

"A hungry snake thrust through the window will make haste to devour the bird, and how then can the prince escape?"

Potiphar stroked his chin with nervous fingers. "No suspicion would fall upon me," he exclaimed.

"Listen to my plan," the younger Theban said very firmly.

As he spoke, he glanced towards Joseph, who sat stiff as a statue carved in stone, but, as it seemed, in a listening attitude.

"Send the youth away," the Theban whispered. "I do not trust him."

Potiphar smote his hands, and Joseph hastened forward with the wine-jar. The elder Theban spoke to him in Egyptian: "Has the river begun to run green?" he asked.

Joseph gazed at him with large vacant eyes and did not answer.

"Did I not tell you he does not understand?" smiled Potiphar. He then addressed Joseph in his own language. "Go below, I shall not require you again to-night."

The Hebrew slave bowed and descended into the house. He lingered in his chamber until darkness fell, and then crept into the prince's garden, where he found Suti waiting for him. He related all he had heard.

"I shall not sleep to-night," whispered the blind slave.

Joseph returned to Potiphar's house, sought his couch, and soon fell into a deep slumber. He dreamed a dream of terror, in which he saw the prince attacked by fierce reptiles, and when he arose to serve the morning meal, his heart was heavy with thoughts of his dream. As he waited on Potiphar and his guests, he, however, heard glad tidings. The younger Theban related to Potiphar how his plot had been thwarted.

"It chanced" he said, "that the blind slave entered the prince's chamber at dawn. He heard the rustling of the snake, which the bribed sentinel had lowered from the roof in a basket, and immediately set down on the floor a dish of warm milk and honey which must have been mixed with poison. The snake smelled the milk and drank greedily. When the prince was awakened by his pet bird, he beheld a dead snake lying nigh to his couch. He uttered a cry of terror, but Suti spoke to him reassuring words, and said: 'Be not afraid! I dreamed a dream last night and feared that the doom-snake was about to enter my lord's chamber, so I had a dish of milk and honey and poison prepared for it.' The prince rose up and embraced him. 'To you I owe my life, my faithful Suti,' said he. When he had heard these words, the bribed sentinel withdrew."

"Cunning, indeed, is blind Suti," remarked the elder Theban lord, "but he shall not protect the prince from the crocodile."

Joseph listened intently, but the Thebans said nothing more regarding the crocodile.

"The river has begun to rise," Potiphar informed his guests, "and is running green this morning."

All day long Joseph nursed the hope that he would hear more of the fresh plot against the prince's life, when his master and the Thebans would go out to sit on the roof after they had partaken of the evening meal. But in this he was disappointed. Before the sun had begun to set, Potiphar handed to the Hebrew slave a papyri roll and said: "Carry this letter to the captain of yonder Cretan ship which lies stranded on the sandbank. Shout to the sailors from the river bank and one of them will come ashore. Then wait for a letter which will be given to you."

Joseph made haste to carry out his master's instructions. He ran down to

"Be not afraid!"

the river bank and shouted to the Cretans. Two sailors came ashore in a small skin canoe. One of them spoke to him in Egyptian. Joseph pretended not to understand. Then the other addressed him in the Canaanite tongue, and he answered readily, saying, " I am the slave of Potiphar and the bearer of a letter to your captain. Here I shall tarry until you bring me an answer."

" I shall speak with you later," smiled the sailor, who could converse in Joseph's native language, as he set out towards the ship, poling the frail canoe.

An Egyptian peasant was digging a hole in the sand into which the water filtered slowly and as clear as crystal.

" The green water is poisonous," this man explained, " but the sand purifies it."

" I have never before seen the Green Nile," Joseph said, gazing at the river.

" The river will run green for four days," the Egyptain went on, " then it will rise rapidly and become red with the blood of Osiris. The Red Nile brings new life to the land of Egypt. Yonder foreigners will hail it with joy, because their ship will be refloated and they can then depart to their own land across the ocean."

Joseph was still conversing with the peasant when the two Cretan sailors returned from the ship. The man who spoke the tongue of Canaan addressed him and said: " You will lead me to your master, to whom I shall deliver my captain's answer to the letter which you brought hither."

Joseph bowed. " I shall lead you to Potiphar as you desire," said he.

Together they then turned from the river bank, the other Cretan sailor remaining beside the skin canoe.

" How can you live in this stifling land?" asked the man, when they were out of hearing of the others.

" Alas! I am a slave," Joseph answered.

" My mother is a Canaanite," said the Cretan, " and I frequently visit her native land. Does your heart hunger for home?"

" By day and by night I dream of my father's tents," Joseph sighed.

" If it is your desire to escape, I can be of service to you," whispered the sailor. " Come down by night to the river bank. I shall have you concealed in the ship. You will be carried to Crete. There I shall have you placed in a vessel commanded by a kinsman of mine, and he shall set you ashore on the Canaanite coast."

Joseph's eyes sparkled with sudden joy. He was prepared to face even the perils of the great sea so as to regain his liberty.

" I shall meet you after darkness tomorrow evening," the Cretan said. " Your master has asked us to perform a strange service for him."

" I am a slave and know naught of Potiphar's business," Joseph said.

" Then I shall inform you of it, but promise to keep my secret."

Joseph promised.

" My captain," whispered the Cretan, " has been offered a rich reward to capture and bind a crocodile, and to have it carried to yonder garden and placed in the lake which is being constantly kept full by slaves, who raise Nile water to the canal. Before being placed in the lake the crocodile must be unbound. That will be a dangerous task."

Joseph clutched the man's arm. " If my master knew that you had told me of this, I should be put to death," said he. " Do not inform him that you can speak the language of Canaan lest he should supect me of knowing aught."

The Cretan smiled. " He shall not even know," he said, " that I understand what he desires my captain to do. My ears are long, and I but overheard what I have told you. To your master I shall say: ' My

captain bids me to inform your excellency that you shall be readily obeyed.'"

When Joseph met Suti in the darkness that night, he repeated all that the Cretan had said.

"Alas!" moaned the blind slave, "my master bathes each morning and evening in the garden lake. It is the desire of his enemies that he should be devoured by the crocodile."

"You have great cunning, Suti," Joseph whispered; "mayhap you will contrive some plan to save the prince."

"I cannot think of any plan," said Suti, who was trembling with terror. "If I warn the prince, he will send a swift messenger to his father. Then I shall have to make known how I came to hear of this business. It may not go well with you, my friend Joseph, if Potiphar and the Theban lords should swear that they are inncoent. They may cast suspicion on you and on the other slaves in Potiphar's house, declaring that you have all been bribed by Pharaoh's enemies to accomplish the death of the prince. No one will believe what a slave says. It will be discovered that you can converse in the language of Egypt, although you pretend not to understand it. That will be charged against you. But two years ago all the servants of Potiphar and my master were cast into prison because the prince fell sick, and it was suspected that an attempt had been made to poison him."

"I fear to remain in Egypt any longer," Joseph said, and then informed Suti of the opportunity given him to escape.

The blind slave listened intently. "We shall speak further regarding this matter to-morrow night," he said. Then they parted.

IV. THE FLIGHT TO CRETE

On the afternoon of the next day Joseph had an opportunity of conversing again with the Cretan sailor who had promised to arrange his escape from Egypt. He had been sent to the river bank with another letter for the Cretan captain. The Nile had risen so rapidly that the vessel had been drawn into deep water.

"We sail to-night," the sailor informed him, when he returned from the ship and stepped ashore to carry another verbal message to Potiphar. "The crocodile has been caught and bound, and will be placed in the garden lake in the darkness. Come down to the river bank and wait for me. I shall take you on board the ship before those who are to carry the crocodile to the garden have returned."

Joseph hastened to warn Suti soon after sunset. He found the blind slave greatly excited.

"I have informed Prince Rameses," he said, "and he has resolved to escape from Egypt. He has written a letter to his father, the Pharaoh, and has charged me to deliver it. I shall travel on foot to Memphis, setting out in the darkness as soon as Rameses has taken his departure. The prince will hide among strangers until he has reached his twentieth year. In his letter he has written: 'I have been warned in a dream, and my faithful Suti will inform you whither I have gone'."

"But how can the prince escape unobserved by the guards?" Joseph asked.

"He will disguise himself as a slave and slip down a rope from his chamber window. Those who keep watch by night in the garden will all be fast asleep. The chief butler has informed me in secret that he has orders to drug their wine. I know well why this is being done. Potiphar would not have the sentinels know that the Cretans have entered the grounds to place a crocodile in the lake."

"But where can the prince hide once he escapes from his house?" Joseph asked.

"You shall be his rescuer," Suti whispered. "Permit him to take your place to-night in the Cretan ship. He will carry a bag of gold with which to reward the sailor who seeks to befriend you."

Joseph placed his hands over his face and wept. His heart had been set on escaping from Egypt.

"You promised to serve the prince," said Suti softly. "When he returns to Egypt he will remember you. I promise that you shall then be set free and sent back to your father."

Joseph dried his tears. "As you desire, so shall I do," he assured his blind friend. "I shall meet the sailor to-night and inform him of my desire."

"Do not reveal to him who Rameses is," Suti whispered.

Joseph promised, and then the friends parted in the darkness. But not for long. They met soon after midnight on the river bank. Rameses, the prince, clad in the white loin-cloth of a slave, had been led through the darkness by the blind Suti, who held his hand as if he had been a child.

The youths whispered a few words one to the other on the river bank. Then Joseph imitated the cry of a night bird, and was answered from the Cretan vessel. His friend came across the river in the small skin boat.

"Take my brother, instead of me, on board your ship," Joseph pleaded. "His life is in danger and he throws himself upon your mercy. He shall reward you with gold."

The Cretan gave ready consent to this arrangement. "I have need of gold," he answered, as he assisted Rameses to descend the steep embankment and enter the small boat.

Suti embraced Joseph and kissed him. "Now," said the blind slave, "I shall turn my steps towards Memphis. Farewell! We shall meet again, Joseph, and I shall see that you receive your reward."

Joseph stole back to Potiphar's house and entered it by the window of his chamber.

When dawn broke over the desert, he climbed to the roof and gazed towards the river. The Cretan ship had vanished and he knew that Prince Rameses had escaped his doom. Then he cast his eyes towards the lake in the garden of the prince's house, and saw the crocodile creeping towards a clump of bushes beside the small lodge which Rameses had been used to enter each morning and evening before and after bathing.

Potiphar and the Theban lords were greatly excited when word was brought to them that Rameses and blind Suti had vanished. At first they thought that both had been devoured by the crocodile, but when Potiphar hastened to Memphis to inform the Pharaoh of the mystery, he was astonished to learn that the prince had taken his departure to a destination which was to be kept secret.

Pharaoh laughed at Potiphar's confusion. "If," said he, "a crocodile has entered the lake, then my son's dream has been a warning from the gods. He has escaped his doom."

Pharaoh Seti dispatched a trusted officer to Crete in one of his great warships. It was arranged that Prince Rameses should live in Knossos Palace as King Minos' guest until he reached his twentieth year. His enemies were thus completely baffled. But ere Rameses returned to Egypt, Suti had died and Joseph lay in prison under a false charge. It was destined, however, that he should be released, and become the Vizier of Egypt and the companion of Pharaoh Rameses, whose life he had saved.

The Gramophone and the Ear

By Charles R. Gibson, F.R.S.E.

There is a very apparent connection between the gramophone and the ear; the gramophone reproduces a sound and the ear detects it, but the title given above is intended to cover more than that, for there is a great similarity between the mechanism of the gramophone and that of the human ear, which will become apparent as we proceed.

Talking-machines.

Long before the invention of the gramophone, people tried to make machines that could speak. These *speaking-machines*, or *talking-machines*, were most elaborate pieces of mechanism. One of these was invented as far back as 1783, but the most interesting one was exhibited in Paris about 1880. This machine had a pair of bellows to imitate lungs, a voice-box or larynx, an india-rubber tongue and lips, a tubular arrangement to represent the nose, and a great number of valves and other pieces of mechanism, all controlled by a key-board and pedals as in a church organ.

One who saw this machine, and heard it speak, says that the words were spoken distinctly, but in a uniform and drawling manner, and, although some of the words were not distinct, the general effect was so good that many people refused to believe that it was in reality the machine itself which spoke, some declaring that the whole affair was the trick of a ventriloquist, who was doing the actual speaking. But Count du Moncel, who was present at the Exhibition in Paris, says:

"The public will believe that the assertions of ventriloquism are unfounded when I say that I myself have made the machine speak."

The talking-machines of to-day are something quite different; we do not try to originate the speech by them, but we do reproduce what has been spoken into the machine previously. We require no complicated mechanism as in those early speaking-machines; the mechanism of the gramophone is of the very simplest, and it will be of interest to see how the gramophone came to be invented.

The Phonograph.

The *phonograph* was the name given to Edison's talking-machine. The name is derived from the two Greek words, *phone*, sound, and *grapho*, I write or record. Another name was the *graphophone*, which you will see is a simple inversion of the word phonograph. Then came the word *gramophone*, used by another inventor, and no doubt suggested by an inversion of the word phonogram; the word phonogram being related to the word phonograph in

the same way as *telegram* is to *telegraph*. A phonograph produced a phonogram, and the phonogram might be reproduced by a gramophone. It was really a word coined for a new machine, and not, as many suppose, to distinguish between a cylinder and a disc machine, for Edison had used flat discs as well as round cylinders in his original phonograph.

What is Sound?

Before tracing the invention of the gramophone, it will be helpful to form a clear mental picture of the *sound* which is to be recorded and reproduced by the instrument.

Soon after the invention of wireless telegraphy, an old lady said to the writer that she could not understand how the words could fly through the air from the shore to a ship at sea. She pictured detached words flying off from the shore, and by some mysterious means landing on the ship. Her mental picture was that of written words, she did not realize that it was merely a series of electric impulses or waves which travelled out from the shore to the ship and made signals there. But when one person speaks to another, in ordinary conversation, do spoken words actually pass from one person to the other? Yes! words do pass, but we must understand what a spoken word is; it is composed entirely of waves in the surrounding air. You do not send air from where you stand to where your friend stands, you merely send a wave motion through the ocean of air.

Making Waves.

Picture a boy standing in the centre of a pool of water, the surface of which is beautifully calm. The boy is armed with a stick, on the foot of which there is a round flat disc or plunger. When he moves this plunger up and down he sends out a wave across the surface of the pond. This spreads out all around him, and in time reaches the shore of the pond. If he keeps the plunger moving at a slow rate, he produces a series of what we call *long waves*. The length of a wave has nothing to do with the long face or front of the advancing waves, but refers entirely to the length between the crest of one wave and the crest of the succeeding wave. Of course, the measurement may be taken from trough to trough, or from any one point to the similar point on the succeeding wave.

If the boy wishes to make shorter waves, he must make them follow each other at a quicker rate, so he moves his plunger up and down more frequently. We say that he has increased the *frequency* of the waves, which is another way of saying that he has produced more waves per minute, or again, that he has made a series of shorter waves.

Waves in the Air.

The air-waves, which we call *sound*, are produced also by something vibrating to and fro in the air. This is very apparent when you strike a drum or gong. It is also very obvious when you pluck the strings of a harp or a banjo, or when you pull a bow across the strings of a violin, or again when you cause the small hammers in a piano to strike the wires. In each of these cases it is evident how the waves are produced in the surrounding air. If you study the action of any wind instrument, you will find something vibrates there also. In the case of an organ pipe or a trumpet or a flute, it is a column of air which is set into a state of vibration, and the air-waves are produced.

The Human Voice.

When we speak it is the same thing again; we set something vibrating. In this case it

is the vocal chords in the throat which we vibrate. These are not really like ordinary chords or strings, they are stretched membranes which partially block the way of the air from the lungs. We send a blast of air from the lungs into our windpipes, and these so-called chords vibrate to and fro. The tighter we draw them, the quicker will they vibrate, and the higher the pitch of the resulting sound. You may feel the tightening of these vocal chords as you sing up the scale.

What is the Tone?

Sometimes you say that a person spoke in a very low tone. That is something quite different from a low pitch or deep note, for a child with a high-pitched voice might speak in a low tone, not wishing to disturb someone who is sleeping. The word *tone* really means quality, and it is dependent upon the particular form of the air-wave.

For instance, the very same note may be produced by a piano, a cornet, a violin, a church organ, and so on. Each can produce a series of waves of exactly the same number per second, so the pitch is identical. You could arrange that the loudness would also be the same, and yet there is quite a different quality or tone in each sound. With your eyes shut you could detect quite easily whether it was the piano, the cornet, the violin, or the church organ which was making the sound.

We produce great varieties of air-waves by means of our voices. After the lungs and vocal chords have set up the vibrations, we form the air-waves with the aid of our tongue, our nose, our teeth, and our lips.

The Human Ear.

These air-waves, or spoken words, impinge upon the drums of our ears and set

Section of the Ear

D, Drum. H, Hammer. A, Anvil. S, Stirrup.

them vibrating in sympathy with the incoming waves. There is a small chain of bones attached to the drum of the ear and connected across the middle ear to the inner ear, and all the vibrations are transferred to a liquid, and thence to the nerves, setting up those nervous impulses which, on reaching the brain, produce all those sensations which we call sounds.

Recording Sound.

More than twenty years before Edison made his first phonograph, another inventor, Leon Scott, invented what he called a *phonautograph*. You know the meaning of the word autograph, as you have no doubt been the possessor of an autograph album, and we have seen already that the Greek word for sound is *phone*, so you could guess that the phonautograph was a machine by which sound might record itself.

Scott made his machine on somewhat the same principle as the construction of the human ear. There was a horn into which

he spoke, and the inner end of this was closed by a stretched membrane, not unlike the drum of the ear. You know that in the ear there is a small chain of bones attached to this drum, and that these bones convey the vibrations to the inner ear. In Scott's machine there was attached to the back of the stretched membrane a stiff bristle, the free end of which rested on a lamp-blackened sheet of paper, carried on a revolving cylinder. Words spoken into the horn caused the membrane to vibrate, and the bristle moved to and fro on the paper, leaving a tracing of the movements of the membrane. This machine recorded the sounds, but there was no idea of reproducing the sounds.

What the Telephone Suggested.

Between the time of Scott's phonautograph and Edison's phonograph, there appeared the electric telephone, in which a simple metal disc was caused to vibrate, and reproduce at a distance the words spoken against another vibrating disc. There is no doubt that this led Edison to the invention of the phonograph. Scott had shown that sound might be recorded by the vibrations of a diaphragm or stretched membrane, and the telephone had shown that a vibrating disc could reproduce sounds.

The First Phonograph.

Instead of making a bristle produce marks on a blackened paper, Edison arranged a metal point, or stylus, to move with the vibrating diaphragm and produce a series of very small indentations on a sheet of tinfoil stretched over a brass cylinder with grooves in it.

When this cylinder was rotated by a crank handle, it not only revolved but it also moved along gradually, owing to part of its spindle having a screw-thread on it, and this, fitting into a screwed bearing, caused the cylinder to move along, so that every part of the spiral groove of the cylinder passed in succession in front of the recording stylus.

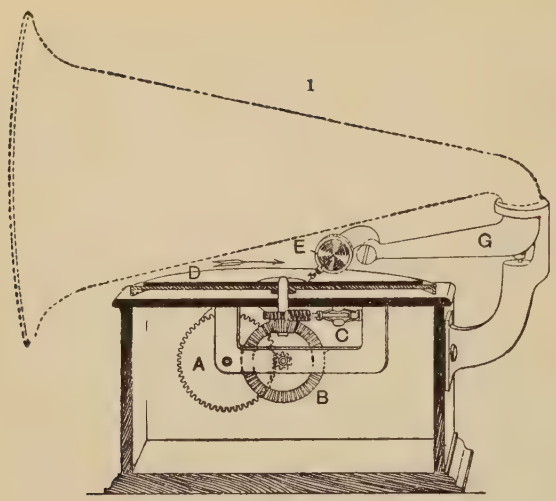
Then came the idea from the telephone. If the disc could be made to vibrate again, just as it did when spoken against, the vibrating disc ought to set up air-waves exactly similar to those made by the original speech. This was done by making the stylus pass again over the small indentations which it had made previously. Now the stylus rose and fell, and its to-and-fro movements gave similar movements to the diaphragm to which the stylus was attached, and so the diaphragm vibrated and set up in the air a series of waves which was a reproduction of the series produced by the speaker.

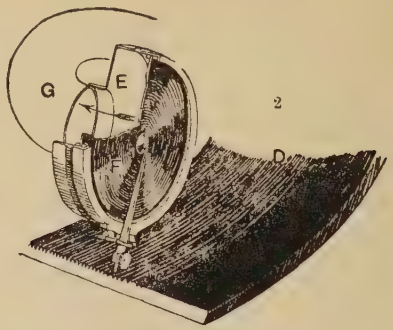
Edison's first phonograph (1877) was a very imperfect instrument. For the next ten years Edison was very busy trying to invent some means of using electricity for lighting houses, and he did not have much time to think about his phonograph till 1888, when he made a great improvement by using a wax cylinder in place of a sheet of tinfoil. He also introduced a clock spring to drive the cylinder.

The Inside of the Gramophone.

You know the flat disc records of the gramophone; all the working parts of the machine are shown in the diagram.

The machine requires some energy to make it go, and you supply that energy when you wind it up. You store the energy in the main spring, and it is allowed to uncoil itself again very gradually, and in doing so it turns the cylinder A in which it is contained. You see how a ratchet-wheel and pinion convey this turning motion to the large bevel-wheel B. You can see a bevel-pinion fitting into the wheel on B, and you will observe that this pinion is carried on the lower end





1. Section of Gramophone

A, The cylinder, containing mainspring.
B, Bevel wheel transmitting power to disc.
C, Governor. D, Disc. E, Sound-box.
F, Diaphragm. G, Tone arm.

2. Sound-box partly in section, showing Diaphragm and Stylus Bar

of a short upright shaft, on the top of which is fastened the turn-table on which the disc record lies. And so you see how your own energy put into the coiling up of the spring causes the record to revolve.

The Governor.

You will notice the *governor* at C. This consists of three small weights, each fixed to a flat spring. These spin round as the machine goes, and the weights tend to fly outward. They are enabled to do so as the springs, though fixed at one end, are only fixed to a sliding collar at the other end, and this collar can slide along the spindle when the weights pull outwards. In doing so this moving collar applies a brake and slows off the clock-work. The weights fly outwards whenever the machine tends to go too quickly, and then the brake is applied, hence the name—the governor. You can see that the governor shaft C is made to revolve by the worm and the worm-wheel on the end of the spindle.

The Vibrating Diaphragm.

The sound-box E contains the diaphragm, which may be a small disc of mica. It is to this disc that the stylus is attached, and, moving with each vibration of the diaphragm, it cuts the record on the disc.

In reproducing the sound, the stylus is moved to and fro by the irregular grooves of the record, so that the diaphragm is thrown into the same states of vibration as were produced originally by the speaker's voice or a musical instrument.

You can see the horn, which is connected by means of a metal tube to the sound-box, and in the smaller diagram you see an enlargement of the sound-box E, showing a bit of the diaphragm F and some of the irregular markings D which have been produced by the cutting stylus, and which will again cause the diaphragm to vibrate.

The real marvel of the gramophone and of the telephone lies in the fact that a little flat disc when vibrating can reproduce all the wonderful sounds for the original production of which we require all our speaking mechanism, and various forms of musical instruments; the little diaphragm can imitate them all.

JACK·STANDFAST'S·ADVENTURE

By S. J. Adair Fitzgerald

I

With all the world before him, Jack Standfast sat at the base of the ancient Dick Whittington stone at Highgate, wondering whether he too should hear the Bells of Bow call him. An orphan, and just finished with school, Jack was bound for London, there to meet his only remaining relative, the uncle to whose care he had been consigned when the father he scarcely remembered had gone upon a voyage of adventure whose end was never known.

As the boy sat resting idly enough, his eyes lighted upon a man who sat on a bench in front of the " Whittington Arms " just opposite. The stranger was busy over a meal of bread and cheese, but Jack did not hesitate to cross the road and accost him; he seemed an experienced traveller and one likely to know the way to Cheapside, of which Master Standfast was ignorant. So these two became acquainted.

" Sam Solon, at your service," said the man. "How do you call yourself, young sir?"

" Jack Standfast," was the prompt reply.

" And a very good name, too; but let's be off. I like Tom Bassett less than I do his ale and the Whittington Arms."

For a moment Jack was puzzled by this remark, but happening to look up he understood that Tom Bassett was mine host of the inn, as the swinging sign over its door proclaimed.

" As your way happens to be mine, we'll go in company," said Sam.

II

As they trudged along Jack soon found that his companion was a packman who dealt in laces, ribbons, and other such goods, and who sang and sold ballads at most of the country fairs. He was well known on every road about London, and was delighted to have for a listener one to whom London and its ways were strange, so that Jack was able to respond to his confidences just as much as seemed wise, and no more. When at last they parted at Holborn Hill, Sam bound for Islington Fair and Jack for Cheapside, the lad had learned more than one useful fact, but he little suspected then the value of Sam Solon's parting warning.

" Beware of young Tom Bassett, if ever you chance to meet him. 'Tis his father keeps the Whittington Arms, and queer tales are told of the pair," said the packman, as they paused at the cross-roads. " Young Tom is a rascal, certainly. As to his father, why, who knows? and for that matter, who cares?" And with that Sam was gone.

The afternoon was merging into dusk as Jack Standfast, rather weary and footsore, reached the shop of William Armstrong, goldsmith, hard by Bow Church in Cheapside. As he stood rather doubtfully on the threshold an elderly man approached the door, scanned him doubtfully for a moment, and then cried in a hearty voice:

" 'Tis Jack Standfast at last! Where have you been, lad, not to have answered my letter long ere this? Ho, there, Alice! Here's a country cousin come to see you. Bring candles, lass, and let's see what our nephew is like."

In a moment Jack was relieved of his luggage and ushered into a room in which candles were being lighted, and where a great log fire crackled cheerily He advanced to meet his cousin Alice, a dainty maiden who gave him a demure curtsy and then kissed him shyly.

During the meal which was soon afterwards served, Mr. Armstrong informed Jack that, some time before, he had written asking his nephew to London. " But," said he, " I sent the letter by Tom Bassett, and, as he robbed me and then bolted, perhaps 'twas never delivered. However, now you are here, and I am heartily glad to see you. To the health of our new apprentice, Alice."

As sometimes happens to men or boys who are overtired yet thoroughly happy, Jack lay long awake during his first night in London. His brain busied itself, against his will, with the events of the past day. His walk, his meeting with Sam Solon, that worthy's warning, and on top of it his uncle's news of young Bassett, all kept circling in Jack's head till at last sleep did overcome him. It seemed only a moment till he was awake again, however. Dreaming? There seemed to be noises in the air. Ah, what was that?

A light flashed quickly into the room and then suddenly died away.

A voice seemed to say in whispering tones, " Are you there?"

There was no answer. Then there was a slight clicking sound, darkness fell again, and all was still.

Jack silently rose from his bed and went to the window. Not a sound to be heard in the house; not a sound to be heard in the street except that of the footsteps of a watchman going his rounds.

Half dazed, and not certain whether he was awake or still dreaming, Jack crept back to his bed and fell off to sleep again, to wake up indeed this time to a tremendous knocking on his bedroom door.

III

" Come along, Jack Standfast, or breakfast

will be all devoured before you come down."

Jack was out of bed at once and was soon washed and dressed. He was about to descend the stairs when he hesitated and went quickly back to the lattice in his room. His dream had flashed into his mind. Was it a dream? No, for there on the settle under the window was a small piece of paper. Jack opened it and read: "Not until to-morrow. Who is the boy?"

He could not understand what it meant, but thrusting the note into his doublet he went downstairs to find his uncle and Alice awaiting him.

"Come along, Jack; you're tired after your travels, I'll warrant. However, set to work, as I have much to do to-day."

So they set to. Though the alderman chatted all the time, Jack was somewhat silent. He was puzzled about the note, and just as he was going to speak about it his uncle asked how he liked his room, adding that it was the one that Cherry, the maid, had been using, but now it was to be Jack's room. Then Jack found his courage, told his uncle what had occurred, and produced the note he had found on the settle.

The alderman gave a whistle, while Alice, after scrutinizing the paper, cried, "Why, 'tis in Tom Bassett's silly scrawl."

The alderman got up and began to pace the room.

"Tom Bassett!" he cried, "Tom Bassett! There's some mischief brewing here. And Cherry is at the bottom of it."

"No, 'tis Tom Bassett's work, Father. What do you think, Jack?"

"I think 'tis Tom Bassett." Then he told his uncle about Sam Solon and his warnings.

"'Tis the jewels he is after. Cherry must be packed off at once. Send for her. I'll—I'll—and as for Tom Bassett—Jack! you must go and find Tom Bassett and—and——" The alderman stopped.

"Yes, Uncle, I'll do anything you wish. But what can I do?" answered Jack.

"Cherry is not a bad girl, Father dear. Tom Bassett is leading her to do wrong things. I can find out what it means," said Alice.

"Let me sit down and think. I have a lot of valuable jewels in the house, Jack; jewels that ought to be delivered at the Manor House, Hampstead, to-day. How does Tom Bassett know you are here, Jack?" demanded the alderman.

"I don't know, Uncle. I have never seen him."

"Jack," said his uncle, after a pause, "Tom Bassett is planning to rob me. We must watch Cherry. But first copy out that note, and then go and put the proper note on the settle exactly in the place where you found it. Do it at once, and then when Cherry goes about her work above stairs, we must see whether she takes it, or what happens. I must have a word with the thief-takers, too."

This was no sooner said than done.

After placing the note in his bedroom, as nearly as possible in the place where he had found it, Jack returned to his uncle, prepared for his day's new work. He was just a little excited because events were developing with such splendid rapidity.

"Now, Jack," said the Alderman, "there's serious work before us. Yesterday you were a schoolboy, but to-day you are growing up. I am going to make a man of you."

"Thank you, Uncle. I'm much obliged to you, and I'll do my best," replied Jack, rather surprised.

At this reply his uncle burst out laughing joyously and, catching him by the shoulders, drew him close. Looking steadfastly into Jack's quiet eyes he exclaimed: "Ah, Jack! just like your father, and your mother too. You'll do your best—well, so you shall. I am going to try you this very day. *You* shall

take that parcel of jewellery to Hampstead for me by the coach."

Jack received this information with quite excited feelings of anticipation.

"Yes, Uncle, but where is Hampstead?"

"I will tell you. You learnt to ride at school at St. Albans? Very well; in case you cannot catch a coach to come back you must hire a horse at the Whittington Arms."

"The Whittington Arms?" repeated Jack.

"So that you may be able to get home before night sets in."

"Yes," answered Jack wonderingly, and somewhat nervous as to what was in store.

"I will see you on the road to the coach. I know all the drivers and the coachmen too. Listen, Jack. This parcel must be delivered to-day. Sit down."

So Jack sat down to listen.

"I cannot go myself and leave the house, because I have no one to attend to my customers, and besides, there is no one strong enough to guard the premises and my little Alice. These are bad times, and I see the Robin Redbreasts are very busy."

Jack pondered and wondered why anyone should be afraid of a redbreast. They were such nice little birds. However, he said nothing and his uncle went on to explain, noticing his nephew's bewilderment.

"The Redbreasts are the Bow Street runners—the thief-catchers, and I see a number of them prowling round, so there must be a lot of rogues about too."

Jack had heard about the Bow Street runners, but did not know they were called Robin Redbreasts. The name was given them on account of the red waistcoats they wore when on duty.

The alderman went to a bureau that stood in the left-hand corner of the apartment, while Jack sat mute, almost dismayed. Robin Redbreasts and Bow Street runners! Of course, he had heard about them, but only vaguely guessed who they were and what they were for.

Turning round with a heavy pistol in his hand, Jack's uncle said: "Do you know how to use this? Do you know what it is for?"

Somewhat astonished, Jack responded that he did know, that he had practised with one very often.

"Very well," continued the alderman. "'Tis more for show than for use, but you'll use it, of course, if you must. Are you afraid, boy?"

"No, Uncle. Why should I be?"

"Then——"

But just then Alice entered, followed by Cherry, who was in tears.

"What now! Why is the girl crying?"

"The note was for Cherry, Father," said Alice. "Tom Bassett has promised to marry her, and he wanted her to tell him all about the jewel case and where it is now kept."

At this poor Cherry burst into a perfect storm of weeping, and between sobs protested that Tom Bassett had terrified her into doing as she had done.

"No more tears, girl!" said her master sternly. "Now what does the note mean? Bassett knew you slept in that room and thought you were in it last night."

"Please, master, oh, don't be angry! Tom wanted me to let him into the house when you were all a-bed and asleep."

"Oh! Tom Bassett wanted you to do that, did he? Why?"

"He said if I didn't, master, he would kill me," sobbed Cherry.

"Kill you, indeed! Kill you! Then you promised so that you should not be killed, but were going to let Tom Bassett in to kill all of us instead, eh? Now, Cherry, when were you going to let Tom Bassett in to rob and murder us all?"

"Oh, sir! oh, master!"

"Tell me," continued the alderman. "When was this to happen?"

"Tell me, when was this to happen?"

"Last night, please, master," and Cherry found more tears and very nearly sank to the ground.

"Last night! What does this note mean? I didn't know you could read. It says 'Not to-night; to-morrow'. So he is coming to-night, is he, instead? Take the girl away, Alice, and let Martha see to her. I will be ready for Tom Bassett to-night and for you to-morrow," exclaimed the alderman, turning to Cherry, "and you are not to leave the house to-day under any pretext whatever."

IV

"Now, Jack, as you will see, you have come to Cheapside to more purpose than we reckoned on, eh?"

"Yes, Uncle, I think I am just beginning to be alive!"

"Right, Jack, very true!" and the alderman gave another of his boisterous laughs. "But you are not afraid, boy?" he said, suddenly changing into a serious mood.

"No, Uncle, I am not, because you are not."

"That is good; but yours is the task to-day, and I am beginning to be afraid of the danger."

"What danger, Uncle?"

"The danger to you. I am nervous about you. You have had no experience. The parcel is very valuable, and Tom Bassett knows I have the jewels, and has made up his mind, I think, to steal them from me."

"But, Uncle, he knows you have them

here. He does not know that I am going to take them to Hampstead."

"That is true, Jack, that is true. But, all the same, you are only a boy."

"I am only a boy, Uncle, but you may trust me. You said you were going to make a man of me.

"Spoken like Jack Standfast! Come, we must not waste time. I will go and fetch the jewels. You must depart as quickly as possible. Here is the pistol; put it in the pocket of this great-coat, which will just fit you." So Jack donned the great travelling coat handed to him, and stowed away the pistol and also the large pasty which Alice brought him, wishing him a safe journey. For you must know that the shortest journey in those days was a matter of serious preparations and precautions.

Presently the alderman appeared carrying a small strong leather case which he gave to Jack. "This," said he, "is for my Lord Sayle, at the Manor House, Hampstead. Don't lose sight of it for a moment. My Lord Sayle will give you a sealed receipt, and his servants will show you the way home. The guard of the coach alone will know your destination, and will stop to let you down. I'll do my best to entertain Tom Bassett when he arrives to-night! Now, let's to the coach."

Jack was all elation in anticipation of the great adventure before him, and was on the heels of his uncle as they went down the broad staircase.

However, it happened that the alderman could not accompany Jack even as far as the "Standard" at Cornhill, which was not far off, as a city merchant just then called to see him on important business, so the boy had to start out alone after being fully instructed as to the way, which was simply straight along past Bow Bells, the Guildhall, and the Poultry, and so to the Royal Exchange and the Standard, the starting-place of the coaches to Hampstead.

Cheapside was crowded with citizens, but Jack was in too great a hurry to take notice of anything in particular, even of Sam Solon, who was watching him from the other side of the road, and was following a tall sturdy individual who was evidently very interested in Jack and his progress.

Arrived at the coach office, Jack delivered the message his uncle had given him as a parting injunction and instruction, and took his place inside the vehicle, while Sam Solon went off directly the coach started. Meanwhile the sturdy individual already referred to had disappeared altogether, very mysteriously and quickly.

Filled with the importance of his mission, Jack surveyed his fellow-travellers. There were three stout old gentlemen on the opposite side, a tall, cadaverous, solemn-looking man up in the corner, and a lady and three girls, her daughters, on Jack's side of the coach. Next to Jack on the seat was a large country basket, the property of the ladies.

The coach rumbled along Cheapside and down Holborn Hill, and so on the way past Ely House and round and up through Gray's Inn Lane to Battle Bridge. From this neighbourhood onward they would have to travel through open country with only a homestead or so dotted along the route, where the roads were very bad indeed. Not long after the coach had left Battle Bridge well behind, a heavy mist began to fall, bringing with it a most noisome smell as of sulphur, and causing everyone to cough and sneeze, and cover their faces with their handkerchiefs.

The mist developed into a real northern fog, thick and yellow, which soon became well-nigh impenetrable.

The coach could move only at a walking pace, and the guard left his stand on the

back foothold to trudge alongside, holding animated converse with the driver as to what they should do.

There was little need to discuss matters, because they could not see very well where they were going, except into increasing darkness, and very soon all their bearings were lost.

Inside the coach Jack was clinging to his case with the packet of jewels with one hand and to the big pistol with the other. The passengers began to talk in subdued tones, while the lady and her daughters grew frightened, and the girls fell to sobbing.

A voice at the end of the coach said in melancholy accents, " Be of good cheer! All will be well! Be brave!"

Jack kept silent and tried not to think of all the things he had heard about London fogs and footpads and highwaymen, but he could not altogether repress his excitement.

Everybody was vastly uncomfortable, and most were querulous and irritable.

The driver suddenly drew up after what seemed an intolerable time and cried " Steady!" to his horses.

" Can you see a light, Bob," he asked.

" No, that I can't," bawled the guard, waving his lantern from side to side.

" Very well, then, we must stop a bit. May be the fog will clear presently and let's see where we are. Any ditches about?"

" Can't see none," called out Bob in response, " but halloa, what's them clampings?"

" Can't hear none," replied the coachman.

" I can. Hold still. There's a light in the distance. It's a horseman. You'd better rein in tight."

For a moment all was still, then the sound of hoof-beats was faintly audible through the dull, heavy air.

Everybody could hear and everybody listened.

" May be 'tis someone that can tell us where we are," said Bob.

" May be it ain't; may be it's somebody we don't want to see. Hold on!" yelled the coachman, and then continued: " I'm going to get on, if I can," and he whipped up his horses into a half-hearted spurt. Just then the fog got thinner and clearer, and the chances of getting forward appeared more hopeful.

V

Suddenly a clattering of hoofs broke upon the silence, and a commanding voice, whose owner was dimly seen as a shadowy form on horseback, cried, " Halt!"

The driver at first took no notice of this unexpected order, but a second time the ominous demand came and the coach stopped with a jerk.

As it did so the passengers broke into excited clamour. To Jack it seemed that the one desire of each was to say as much as possible in the shortest time, though none dreamed of listening. For his part, he grasped his pistol quietly and waited. Suddenly from out the fog appeared a mounted man, then came the sound of a blow and a heavy fall. A moment of breathless silence followed, then the terrified passengers heard a suave yet insolent voice say: " 'Tis no good. Your money. Come!" and at the same time the coach was brightly lit by the rays from a swinging lantern. Inside no one spoke or stirred, though the young girls whimpered dismally.

" Quick! I am in haste." This was quite certain, for the heaviness of the atmosphere began to disperse, and tiny flecks of light were mingling with the gloom.

" Your money or——" and a very unpleasant click of a pistol ended the sentence.

The rider was growing impatient.

" Your money or your life, I say. Your purses, quick!"

The stout man began to protest and the women cried, but they got out their money nevertheless, as a big heavy figure came clearly into view at the opening, for the intruder had now leaned forward from his horse, and opening the coach door with a sharp snap called out again for the poor victims to hand up their valuables or he would fire, and they made as much effort to do as they were bid as the agitated state of their nerves would permit. And the thin cadaverous man made more ado than anybody else. Jack, who had kept his body well back in the darkness of his corner, was watching his opportunity with a palpitating heart. His mind was full of the jewel-case he carried, and he determined not to give it up without a struggle—and a fight if need be. He measured the height and strength of the highwayman as well as he could in the half-light, and then, as if by a magical inspiration, at the instant the robber was cocking his pistol with impatience at the delay, he called out in a bold voice, " Tom Bassett! I know you."

It was a grand impulse that prompted him, and it quite threw the man off his guard, causing him to swerve slightly in the saddle. Jack caught at the chance presented to knock up the man's pistol, which went off with a terrible bang to the screaming accompaniment of the passengers.

At the same moment another shot rang out, the highwayman gave a cry of pain, and Jack leaped upon him, flinging aside a smoking pistol as he did so. The boy sprang bodily from the footboard, caught his opponent round the neck, and slewed him from his horse to the ground with a thud.

In another second Jack had sprung into the empty saddle and, pressing his knees into the animal's sides, and clutching at the reins, urged it forward, and dashed madly away into the darkness.

The horse, feeling a new rider on his back, grew restive, but Jack, who was now firmly seated in the saddle with full possession of the reins, soon had him under control, and compelled him to go right onward.

The animal was a good one, and very soon Jack was beyond all danger of pursuit, when he slackened his pace and looked around.

Some distance ahead a large building was visible, and on approaching it Jack at once recognized the Whittington Arms, and knew that his destination was now within easy reach, more especially as the fog was at last lifting, and the road plainly to be seen.

He rode carefully along, keeping a sharp look-out until he came to another large tavern standing at the corner of a very narrow lane. Here he pulled up and called aloud, " House! House!" as he had read that that was the thing to do. Out came a red-headed youth wearing a green apron, and Jack, throwing the reins over the horse's head, alighted in order to ascertain where he was. Telling the stable-boy to attend to his mount and give him water and a rub down, Jack went to the tavern door, where he was greeted by the jovial landlord of " The Spaniards ", for such was the name of the house. He was so thirsty that he called for cider and drank it heartily.

" Ah! that's right good stuff," said Boniface; " The Spaniards is famous for its cider, since nigh this hundred years."

" Then I'll have another tankard," said Jack, " and perhaps you can tell me whether I am anywhere near Lord Sayle's place, and how to reach it."

" Why, bless 'ee, sir! he's my landlord. 'Tis but five minutes from here to walk; the boy shall show you," answered mine host.

This was good news, and, thinking it over, Jack resolved to put up the horse at the inn while he went on to Lord Sayle's,

In another second Jack was in the saddle

which he did after a wash and a brush up. It suddenly occurred to him that the horse belonged to a highwayman and might have been stolen.

Lord Sayle was delighted to receive the packet. He asked kindly about the alderman, and after giving Jack the sealed receipt for the jewels (which he carefully examined —and most magnificent jewels they were), desired to know if he would like some refreshment, but this Jack declined with many thanks, and, without a word about his adventure, set out for home.

Mounting his " borrowed " horse at The Spaniards, it was not long before he was cantering back the way he had come. In a very short time, for he now knew the way, he reached the Whittington Arms, where to his amazement he found quite a concourse of country people and others, Sam Solon among them, surrounding the coach just as the form of the highwayman was being lifted from it. The rascal was badly wounded in the shoulder by Jack's shot, very pale and evidently suffering from much loss of blood.

Seeing his friend, Jack at once approached Solon, to whom he began to detail his adventures, though very soon the story was dramatically interrupted. Above the hubbub of many voices there arose a cry for which Jack was by no means prepared.

" Arrest that boy, guard!"

The cadaverous traveller stood on the steps of the coach, whence he made this startling demand. From the shutter on which he lay, Tom Bassett raised himself and feebly seconded it. " Yes," said he, " arrest the murderer." In reply the guard demanded, " Why?" to which the first speaker repeated, " Arrest that boy," and, after a pause, " he has murdered the highwayman."

Before the guard had decided what to do, however, a diversion was caused by the arrival of a famous thief-taker. This man was the greatest of the Bow Street runners, Townsend by name, and he effectively silenced the tall man with a glance, while on seeing Tom Bassett he said significantly, " Ah! I've got you at last, have I?"

With greedy ears the newcomer listened to the story which Sam Solon insisted on telling, and afterwards Tom Bassett was arrested, not merely for the attack of that day, but for a previous theft, that of the very horse from which Jack had so short a time dismounted. The boy trembled at the thought of what might have happened had he been met by Townsend a few minutes minutes earlier.

" I knew we should meet again," said Sam Solon to Jack. " When I saw Tom Bassett watching you in Cheapside I went to the alderman and warned him, and I expect he is on his way here now."

And lo and behold, as Sam Solon finished speaking, the alderman himself, who had left some runners in charge of his house, drove up with Alice in his own ramshackle old carriage and alighted, to be met by a crowd of gesticulating people who all tried to speak at once.

" My nephew arrested! Tut-tut! You can't arrest him."

" 'Tis all right, sir. There won't be any robbery at your house to-night, sir. I know all about it. And not your nephew—brave boy that is, sir—but Tom Bassett, highwayman and horse-stealer, he is the one. Take him along, boys."

So Tom Bassett, sometime apprentice in Cheapside, was taken up to Bow Street, whose runners had him fast enough, and so out of this story.

Jack Standfast, too, departed for London, but how very differently! In the pleasant company of admiring relatives, proud of his new-found manhood, followed by the cheers of his fellow-citizens.

Speeding up the Ten-fifteen

By Johnston Graham

The X.Y. Railway was a sound and well-managed concern, but it was cautious in the assimilation of new ideas. It believed in regarding a new idea from every point of view before committing itself. It particularly disliked being hustled. And, when the Honourable Martin Clifford joined the directorate, things simply had to hustle.

The Honourable Martin Clifford was a large man, with a large voice, and a " large " manner. He believed in making his presence felt. He said everything with a great deal of " punch " . He was a reformer. His motto was " progress ", and his paragon of excellence was the Great Western.

He tackled the General Superintendent of the X.Y.

" Look here," he said. " I believe in speed. Speed pays. I've been looking over the schedules of some of your trains. Some are quite good, but others are very slow indeed. For instance, take the mail express from Cairnweir to Westoun that I hear you all talking of. It leaves Cairnweir at 10.15 p.m., and it is allowed no less than *fifty-six minutes* to pass Drumbay—only *thirty-seven miles*! Drumbay to Inverorg, twenty-one miles—twenty-seven minutes, that also could be curtailed. Inverorg to Westoun—forty-two miles, with one stop—fifty-four minutes, is again capable of acceleration. But Cairnweir to Drumbay is disgraceful! A miserable average of barely forty miles an hour!"

" You forget, sir," said the Superintendent rather testily, " that in that journey we have to climb a ten-mile bank averaging 1 in 58; also that the whole section from Cairnweir to Drumbay is single line."

The Honourable Martin, a masterful man, waved him aside with a deprecating gesture.

" My dear sir," said he, " don't talk to me of gradients. I've seen the Great Western romping up grades of 1 in 36 at thirty miles an hour! And single line!—Why, if there are two rails four feet eight and a half inches apart, what does it matter if there isn't a neighbouring pair?"

The Superintendent had a thought of explaining, but decided not.

" I think, sir," said he, " that you should ask the Chief Mechanical Engineer for a pass to enable you to travel on the footplate of the Ten-Fifteen's engine. Then you could observe the work for yourself and see where it is capable of improvement."

" Thanks, I will," said the Honourable.

When he had gone the Superintendent 'phoned the Chief Mechanical Engineer.

" I've sent the new director to you to get a footplate pass for the Ten-Fifteen. He wants to cut down her schedule—he has no idea of the work of that train—and that's the only way to cure him. By the way, can you tell me who is the roughest driver on the Ten-Fifteen just now?"

" Andrew Callan," said the Engineer without hesitation.

" I know him," responded the Superintendent with feeling. " He gave me a most unmerciful shaking up on the diner one night——"

"You want me to send Clifford with him?" queried the Engineer.

"I do!"

"Right, I can arrange it!" said the Engineer.

So, when the Honourable arrived, the Chief Mechanical Engineer was ready for him.

"The smartest man who runs the Ten-Fifteen, Mr. Clifford," said he, "is Driver Callan. He will be on the train on Wednesday night. Can you go then?"

"That will suit perfectly," said the Honourable.

. . . . . .

And so it happened that he turned up at Cairnweir sheds on the Wednesday night just as old Andy Callan and his mate were taking a stand-easy, prior to getting ready for the homeward run to Inverorg with the Ten-Fifteen.

He boarded No. 92 and proclaimed his presence.

"Now then, driver; I've got a pass to travel to Inverorg with you to-night. I want the schedule of this train speeded up. The X.Y. trains are all notoriously slow. I'll soon alter that! They say you're the smartest man on this road. Can you be in Inverorg five minutes before time to-night?"

"I can that, sir," said the driver, "provided you'll be responsible should I be called in question."

"Certainly," agreed the Honourable. "I want her in five minutes before time. I'm here to see that you do it, and I'm responsible."

. . . . . .

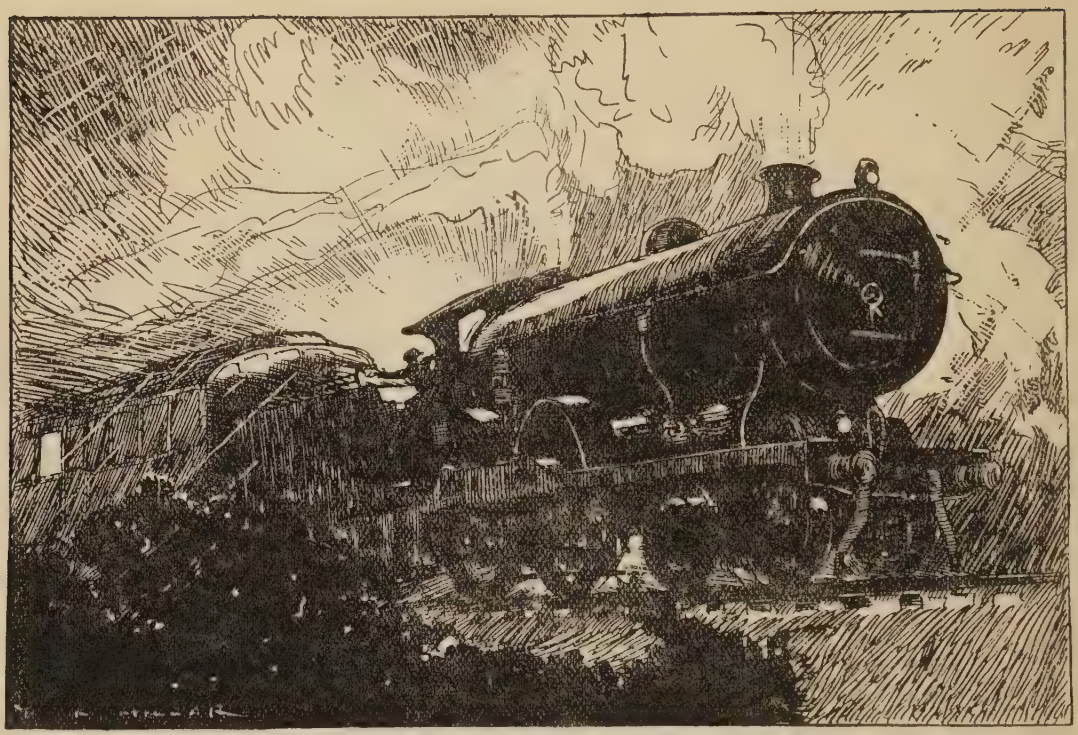
Half an hour later old Andy Callan looked into the enginemen's bothy.

"Stand out of my way, you men!" said he. "I'm the big man to-night. I've a director on the footplate that wants her in five minutes afore time, an' he's there to see I do it!" He held up his oilcan. "Blackleid an' ile! That's her medicine. She's t' run the nicht as she never run!" He went out chuckling. He was a hard case!

Then up and spake a young fireman.

"Weel, a' Ah can say is, Ah'm sorry fur that director! Ah min' the nicht Andy Callan's fireman twisted his ankle an' Ah had t' fire tae Inverorg! Ah couldna keep ma feet nae wey—an' him lashin' her doon thae hills—an' it black daurk—an' gruppin' tablets an' tryin' tae haud on!—Ah wiz deid feart, an' he seen that, an' gaed a' the harder—oh, murder!"

There was much to do before the start—every bearing to be oiled; the fire to be made up gradually, layer by layer; the sand-boxes to be filled; the coal on the tender to be broken small and piled well forward, ready of access on the journey; the footplate to be swept up; and the coal watered. It was ten o'clock when they finally left the sheds and backed down to the station. 10.14 found them sitting at No. 2 platform, the engine, ready for the road, shuddering to the thunder of her roaring safety-valves. Mr. Clifford stood in the centre of the footplate, baked by the heat from the wide-open firedoor, and watching the needle of the pressure-gauge, steady on the red mark at 170 lb. Ahead, at the end of the platform, a green lamp beckoned them out to fare forth on the dark and lonely road. The fireman lay over the side, looking back for the guard's signal. He bent down and quietly closed his side door. The driver bent down and closed his. A vague feeling of apprehension—of being "in for it"—came over the director. There was no drawing back now. He would need to go through with this. He—pooh! What was he thinking of? What absurd——



She began to tramp along in no uncertain style

" Right away!" said the fireman, swinging inboard.

The Honourable Martin Clifford had had two previous footplate trips, both in daylight, and he was astonished at the black darkness in which they worked. Save for the two dim lamps illuminating the steam-gauge and water-glasses respectively, the cab was in total darkness. Ahead was an inky black night, and it was only when the firedoor was opened that they saw the tender and the end of the first carriage, pursuing them relentlessly into the night.

As far as the junction was fairly level, and Andy Callan put them along at a good speed. The engine rolled and banged; every fitting, large or small, rattled and clattered. They passed two stations, and took the swing of the loops with a jerk that caused the director to grab for a handhold. At each station the fireman put off a tablet hoop on to the receiving hook, and picked a fresh hoop with his arm from a post at the other end of the platform. The hoop struck his arm a resounding whack, and the Honourable looked interested.

" That must hurt you a bit," he shouted, for the noise on the footplate was deafening.

The fireman bent forward into the lamp light, his teeth showing white through his grime-streaked countenance. Then he rolled up his left sleeve. From wrist to above the elbow his arm was covered with blue marks! He yelled:

" That's what ye get firin' on the Ten-Fifteen!"

And the Honourable marvelled, and

realized that in some phases of railway working he was yet as a child.

They passed the junction one minute early. The Honourable had his watch and time-table out, and he shouted a word of congratulation to the driver. The latter nodded grimly. They were only starting.

Then came the real tug-of-war. A minute later they had started on the ten-mile climb up the Glenallar bank. The heavy blast echoed loud in the narrow glen. The fireman turned on the steam sand, for the creeping mists from the moss of the moors always made the rails slippery on the Glenallar bank. The driver crossed over to the fireman's side and " handed the door ".

This requires explanation. " Handing the door " is an expedient resorted to when an engine is steaming badly or when extra hard work has to be done. When the fireman opens the firedoor and puts in three or four shovelfuls, a certain amount of cold air necessarily enters also, and the steam pressure falls, especially if the injector is working all the time. There are two ways of avoiding this. The injector can be shut off during the period of firing, but this is apt to result in a too rapid lowering of the water level in the boiler. The other way is for the driver to open the firedoor immediately before, and shut it immediately after, the fireman has put in each shovelful. This reduces to a minimum the time the door is open, and consequently the amount of cold air that can enter during firing.

They climbed steadily up the bank—past Glenallar station, very dark and still, where the fireman exchanged tablets; then they ascended by curve after curve to the high peaty moor, stretching mile upon mile away into the darkness. Eight miles they had climbed—nine—ten—then suddenly the going quickened. They were over the top, and the little green spark of light that danced into their vision, as they gazed through the cab window, was the distant signal for Clashgassel, that lone outpost away in the heart of the silent moors.

There was a descent to Clashgassel, and Andy Callan took the loop at something over thirty miles an hour. The Honourable glanced at his watch, stared, then looked indignantly over at the driver.

" Three——" he began.

Ninety-two gave a sudden lurch, a wild swing of her head. The Honourable dropped his time-table, grabbed the side rail hurriedly, and steadied himself again.

" Three minutes late, driver!" he bellowed.

The driver nodded again grimly.

It was a long eight-mile section to the next station—Moorside—four miles ascent and four falling miles, all over a featureless moor; no cuttings, no embankments, no landmarks. Ninety-two swung on at a steady thirty miles an hour through the black night, swinging round curve after curve till Clifford lost all sense of direction. Four miles out the fireman sprang upon the tender and hastily pulled forward a fresh supply of coal, while the Honourable, who, hanging on tight, could keep his feet only with difficulty, gazed at him in admiration. When he turned the driver was yelling in his ear.

" This is the summit. Noo ye'll see some traevellin'."

" About time too!" grunted the Honourable.

Next moment the fireman had hauled the long iron-handled shovel from the tender, and, flinging open the door, he darted this formidable implement into the roaring, hissing white furnace within, digging and wrenching furiously till the sweat ran down his eager, grimy countenance. The Honourable realized that he was getting glimpses of a world of endeavour such as he had never known. It took all this then to run the

Ten-Fifteen from Cairnweir to Westoun. He shouted.

"What do you do that for?"

The fireman paused a moment.

"Ah'm pu'in' the coals back!" he yelled breathlessly. "She tears them awa' furrit! She's got them bing'd up near to the brick erch! Ah'm pu'in' them back un'er the door!"

And the Honourable, an Englishman, began to understand that to talk to Scottish railwaymen one must first know the language!

When No. 92 got her head over the hill, and smelt her home at Inverorg thirty-seven miles away, she began to tramp along in no uncertain style. Down the corkscrew descent to Moorside she went like a hunted hare. The speed mounted —fifty, sixty, seventy miles an hour they must have been going. With one hand locked on the side rail of the cab, the other gripping the lid of the tool-box, the director hung on like grim death. One moment his wrists were almost wrenched out of their sockets, next moment he was being dashed violently against the cab side. An extra vicious lurch threw him up against the fireman, and he yelled at the pitch of his voice:

"It's—dreadfully—rough! Is this a—bad—engine?"

The fireman put his mouth close to his passenger's ear.

"Smoothest o' the lot!" he trumpeted. "Ye should try Eighty-nine!" He reached out for his tablet. They had shut off steam

Clutching wildly at the driver's legs

and the reek of the sulphur swirled back on them in spite of the buzzing blower. The safety-valve blew off with a hissing blast. They were approaching Moorside.

Faintly wondering what No. 89 must be like, the Honourable with difficulty got one hand free and extricated his notebook and time-table. He saw two lamps flash past in succession at fifty miles an hour, saw one tablet disappear into the darkness—an exasperated signalman searched two hours for it—and the fireman scoop up another, then——

Slam!

They took the swing. He clutched wildly—notebook and time-table disappeared overboard. Then Ninety-two gave a sickening backward lurch, there came a gush of coal from the tender, and the Honourable sat down on the footplate with a jarring thump. And Ninety-two yelled out in every fibre of her hardly used frame.

He staggered up and clutched hold like a drowning man. For they were going now. Down the four-mile bank to Ringford they went like a very tornado, Ninety-two thundering headlong down into that black void, and swinging so wildly that Clifford marvelled that an engine could swing so and yet keep the rails. The footplate was an inferno of noise. He clung on blindly. He felt the stifling waves of heat beating back from the firebox. He was battered this way and that; his hat fell off, but he dared not let go to retrieve it. Oil-cans and tea-flasks clattered from their shelves and pitched into corners. Dimly he remembered he had come to speed up this train!

With a long, sweeping roar they sped through the loop at Ringford. Bang! It was the worst curve of the lot, and the Honourable went down like a ninepin. Crash he went, down on to the footplate, clutching wildly at the driver's legs. He felt the heaving footplate reel beneath him. Next moment he was bundled vigorously out of the way, and the driver came over to hand the door. For already they were tearing away on an upgrade of 1 in 80.

With the impetus of her previous descent, No. 92 made light of the three-mile climb. Up she snored, echoing through the thick woods and the rock cuttings, sending the dancing sparks rocketing high above the trees. They passed Daldean station, nestling in its cosy fir-woods, and thundered up the last half mile to the Summit tunnel.

Daldean tunnel was a single line one, some three hundred yards long, narrow of section, low of roof, and with a ventilation system something on the lines of that of the Black Hole of Calcutta. As they approached it an evil light came into the old driver's eye.

"In wi' a big fire, boy!" he cried.

With fiendish glee the fireman put in ten shovelfuls. They emerged from the tunnel with the Honourable bending down into the corner of the cab, only half sensible, gasping and coughing in an endeavour to clear the sulphur from his lungs. A hard-working engine in Daldean tunnel is not a pleasant companion.

Next came the final hurricane descent—five miles at 1 in 54—to Drumbay. To the director it was a very horrible nightmare. He was afraid now—black afraid. He would have given fifty pounds to be sitting in a room of Inverorg Hotel, to be even deposited safely on the line-side—anywhere out of this. From the enginemen he got no sympathy. Each lay over his respective rail, clinging tightly against the wild swinging of the engine, gazing with screwed-up eyes into the darkness ahead. And at most, they could be only one minute ahead of time. And he had ordered the driver to make up five!

With a roar like a thunderclap they were on to the double line and down through

Drumbay station, and round the curve with a tremendous swing. The fireman put off his last tablet with a joyous abandon. It missed the hook, but what matter, it got the platform, and, charging along, it bounced high against the wall of the station. He caught a glimpse of the clock—they were one minute early—good work! When the fireman turned the Honourable was lying full sprawl on his back, his head pillowed on a heap of small coal, brought down from the tender in their last thunderous descent!

The rest of the journey is best told as the fireman told it, after the run, to an ecstatic night-shift at Inverorg shed.

" Efter Drumbay he got waur an' waur at keepin' his feet, an' at the hinner-en', he plumps doon in the middle o' the fitplate, an' hauds his heid in his hauns. He was richt in ma road fur the firin', an' Ah tell ye Ah hud tae keep nippin' them in, fur auld Andy wiz pittin' her up thae banks like stoor; so Ah trail't him ower an' he lay up against auld Andy's legs an' moan't; an' whiles he says: ' Oh, for the love of goodness, could you not go slower?' but auld Andy never let on he heard him. Oh, he was great! He pit her doon thae hills —Ah tell ye, the fire was fleein' frae every flange gaun roon' the curves at Cairter's Brig! Ah'v fired tae Big Jock Nicol, an' Ah'v fired tae Sanny Scott, but Ah never hud a rin like that!"

And, as they came to a standstill at Inverorg station, old Andy Callan took his unfortunate passenger by the arm and hauled him to his feet. Then he pointed to the clock and cried triumphantly:

" *Five minutes afore time!*"

They were—to the second!

But the director was past caring. He freed himself from the driver's grasp, staggered dazedly on to the platform, and disappeared into the night.

. . . . . .

One fine frosty day about two months later Andy Callan was oiling his engine at Inverorg platform when the Chief Mechanical Engineer came up.

" Good day, driver!"

" Good day, sir!"

" By the way," said the Engineer, " that was a pretty rough run you gave Mr. Clifford a little while ago. He was in bed for a week after it!"

The old driver's beard bristled.

" Well, sir, he asked me to be in five minutes before time. I did, sir, and if he got a rough shaking it's his own fault!"

The Engineer smiled.

" I'm not blaming you, Callan. Between ourselves, I rather hoped he'd get a rough run. The man was an unmitigated nuisance. He's quite cured now, and very anxious to impress on people the hard times enginemen have."

" Glad to hear it, sir!"

" At the same time, Callan—don't run so hard again, or I'll have to give you a row for it."

" Not till you require me to do it, sir," said old Andy.

As the Chief departed up the platform the old man looked after him with a sardonic gleam in his eye.

" *He didna ken Ah wiz seeven minutes afore ma time las' nicht!*" said he.

NOTE.—min' = mind (remember); wey = way; haud = hold; deid feart = dead frightened; pu'in' = pulling; bing'd = heaped; erch = arch; hinner-en' = hindmost end (afterwards); stoor = wind-blown dust.

The Last Tablet

Chess for Beginners

By Thomas Lochhead

Chess is commonly looked upon as a hard game to learn. It is not really difficult, however, though, like many another game, it requires study and long practice if one wants to become an expert exponent of it. One may be in doubt whether to take a Knight for nothing or give away a Queen for position. But such a doubt need never worry a beginner; it is for the expert.

Chess is played on a square board marked off like a draught-board into 64 squares, the

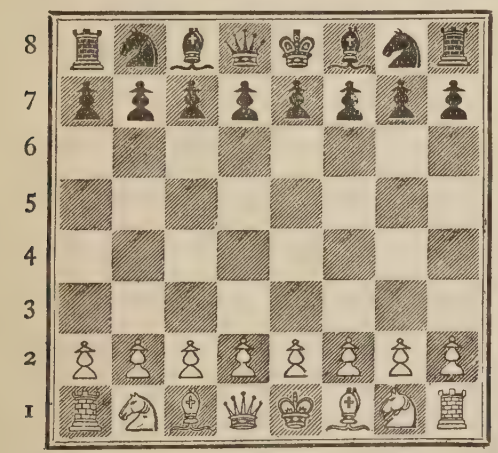


Fig. 1

squares being coloured alternately black and white. Two players face each other, and each has a black square at his left-hand corner of the board. Each player has eight " pieces " and eight pawns, one player's set being white and the other's black. The pieces are King, Queen, two Bishops, two Knights, and two Rooks, and they are placed on the board in the position shown in fig. 1. The pawns form a full row in front of the pieces.

In placing the pieces it should be remembered that the Queens are always put on the square of their own colour—the black Queen on black and the white Queen on white—and face each other across the board.

For the purpose of identification each square on the board is numbered (see fig. 1). From either end of the board the first row is No. 1, the second, 2, and so on, so that the square on which the Queen begins the game is called Queen 1 or Queen's square, and the squares beyond are Queen 2, Queen 3, &c., up to Queen 8. As each player counts his squares in the same manner from his own side, it follows that White's Queen 8 is Black's Queen 1, and vice versa, and White's *Queen's* Rook 3 is Black's *Queen's* Rook 6. In learning the game from a book it is essential to remember this notation, and to note the *Queen's* side and *King's* side in naming the pieces.

The object of each player is to capture his opponent's King, but the game stops one move short of actual arrest. When the King cannot escape it is said to be " checkmated ".

The pieces and pawns are moved each sort in its own particular way, and the beginner at the game must acquaint himself with their possibilities and limitations.

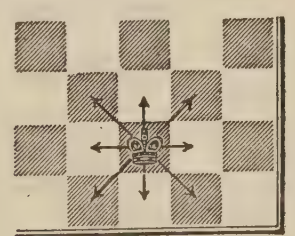


Fig. 2.—King's Move

Of the pieces, the *King* is the most restricted in its movements. It can move only one place, that is, to any square touching the one on which it happens to be standing.

The *Queen* has the greatest freedom. It can move any distance in any direction, diagonally, vertically, or horizontally.

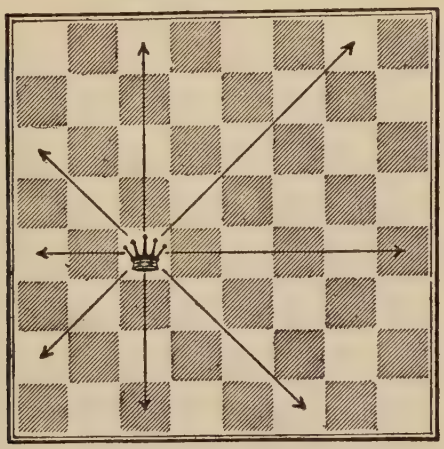


Fig. 3.—Queen's Move

The *Bishops* can move only in a diagonal direction, the one keeping on the white squares and the other on the black.

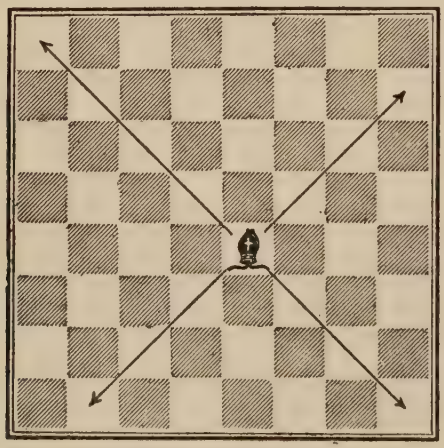


Fig. 4.—Bishop's Move

The *Knights* have a peculiar movement. They move three squares by travelling two in a straight line and one to either side, so that they always land on the opposite colour from which they move. Moreover they are allowed to jump over other pieces or pawns.

The *Rook* can move only vertically and horizontally.

The Queen, the Bishop, and the Rook may travel as far as the passage is clear, or may go one square farther by taking the opponent's piece which blocks the passage.

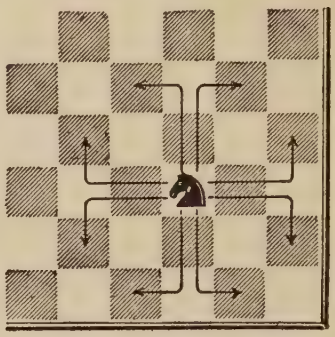


Fig. 5.—Knight's Move

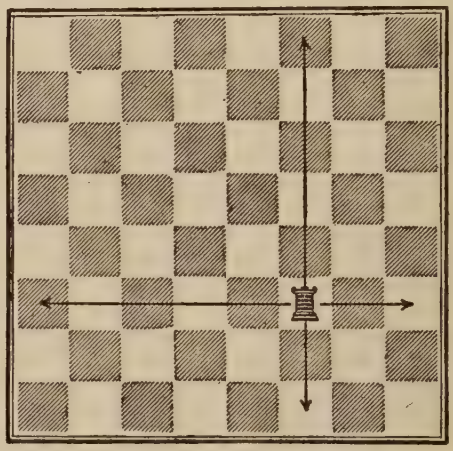


Fig. 6.—Rook's Move

The *pawns* can move forward only, and that but one square at a time, excepting the first move of each, which may be two squares. They move in a straight line unless when taking an opponent's piece, which must be taken diagonally. If a pawn move two squares for its first move, and in doing so passes (that is, is level with) an opposing pawn, the latter, but in its next move only, may capture the former as if it had moved one square only. Fig. 7 shows *Black's* King's Knight pawn on square 5. White has just played his King's Bishop's pawn two places. Black, if he care to, can in his next move

take that pawn as if it had been played one square only, placing his pawn on Bishop 3. This is called taking a pawn *en passant*.

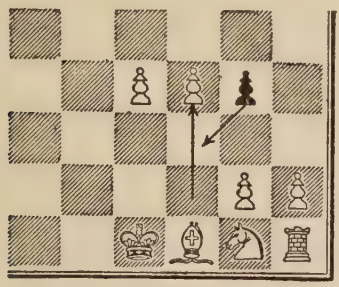


Fig. 7.—En passant

When a pawn succeeds in reaching the back row of the board it is privileged to change its character, and the player may chose to make it a Queen, Bishop, Knight, or Rook. He may thus have two or more Queens at one time.

Fig. 8.—Position before Castling

One useful move should be noted. It is called " castling ". When the Bishop and Knight on the one side, or the Queen, Bishop, and Knight on the other have been played out, if the King and Rook have not been moved the King may

Fig. 9.—After Castling on Queen's Side

be shifted to the second square along and the Rook brought to the square on the other side of the King. This may not be done, however, when the squares over which the King must pass are directly attacked by an opposing piece

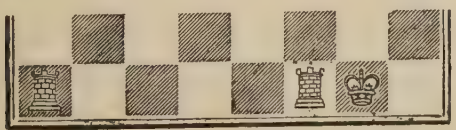


Fig. 10.—After Castling on King's Side

or when the King is in check, or would go into check as a result of the move.

The pieces and pawns may be taken by the opposing side by placing the capturing piece on the square of the one captured. The *en passant* rule is an exception to this. It is not obligatory to take a piece unless that be the only way of releasing the King from check.

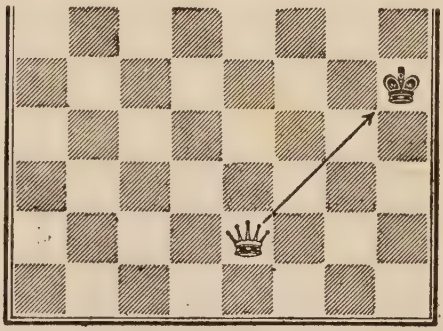


Fig. 11.—Check

The King is in check when it is on a square commanded by an opposing piece. There are three ways of taking it out of check: (1) by moving it to another square not commanded by an opposing piece, (2) by interposing another piece, (3) by taking the checking piece with the King or another piece. If none of these three moves can be made, then the King is " mated ", and the game is at an end.

We should now be able to play our first game. White always begins. The commonest opening is the King's pawn on both sides.

	White.	Black.
Move 1.	KP to K4.	KP to K4.

White moves King's Pawn to King fourth square. Black replies with same move.

Move 2.	KKt to KB3.	QKt to QB3.

White moves King's Knight to King's Bishop third square. Black moves Queen's Knight to Queen's Bishop third square.

Move 3.	KB to B4.	KB to B4.

White moves King's Bishop to Queen's Bishop fourth square. Black moves the same.

Move 4.	P to QKt4.	B takes KtP.

White moves Queen's Knight's Pawn to Knight fourth square. Black takes the Knight's Pawn with Bishop by removing the pawn and placing the Bishop on that square.

Move 5. QBP to B3. B to R4.

White attacks Black's Bishop with Pawn. Black retires his Bishop one square.

Move 6. QP to Q4. P takes P.

White moves his Queen's Pawn to the fourth square. Black takes it with his King's Pawn.

Move 7. Castles. P to Q6.

White castles on the King's side by placing the King on the Knight's square and the Rook on the Bishop's square. Black advances his Pawn to avoid capture by White's Pawn.

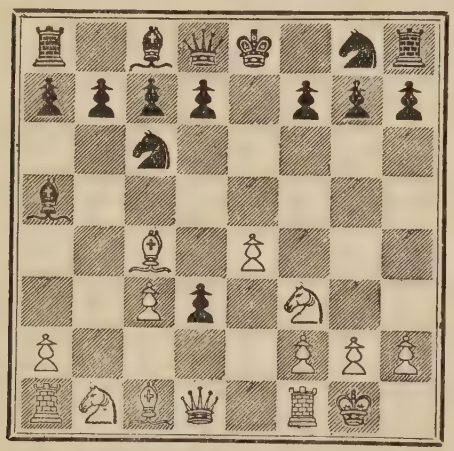


Fig. 12

The position after the seventh move is shown in fig. 12.

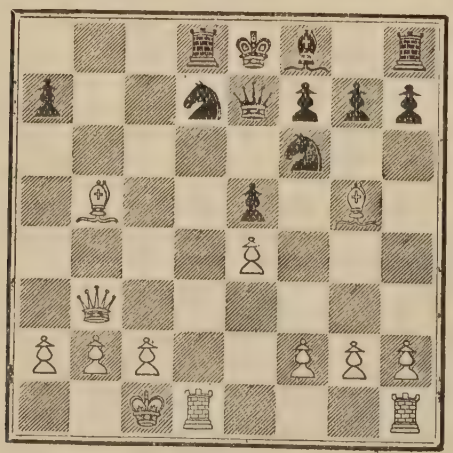


Fig. 13

In fig. 13 is given the end of a game showing how the King is put in check and mated. Place the men as shown.

It is White to move.

White.	Black.
1. R takes Kt.	R takes R.
2. R to Q sq.	Q to K3.
3. B takes R (check).	Kt takes B.
4. Q to Kt8 (check).	Kt takes Q.
5. R to Q8 (mate).	

After these moves we see (1) that there is no black piece in a position to remove the white Rook; (2) the King cannot take the Rook because the Rook is covered by the Bishop; (3) it cannot move into King 2, which is also covered by the Bishop; (4) it cannot move into Queen 2 which is covered by the Rook; and (5) no piece can be interposed between the Rook and the King. White has therefore won.

When a player finds he cannot win a game he may play for "stalemate". That is, he manages by his own good play or his opponent's carelessness to get into a position where he is not in check, but from which he cannot move without going into check. See fig. 14.

It is Black to play. His pawns cannot move, and the King is not in check. The King, however, cannot move without going into check to the Queen or the pawn. Black therefore claims stalemate and the game is a draw.

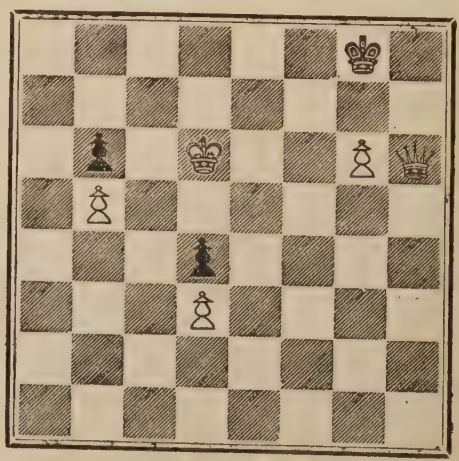


Fig. 14

"'Tis Jack Lanscombe, as I live!"

Dick Varney's Diamonds

By J. S. Elder

I

There were brave doings in Bristol, and most others of our English ports, when first I went sailing (it was before the Peace of Ryswick), and no lack of merry adventures to be dared, most with some hint of profit in them too. Not that I went to Bristol on that particular day with any idea of making the sea my road to fortune, or fame either, but rather by way of passing the time.

My parents were but lately dead, and, as I had little liking to spend my life farming in a corner of England, I had sold the old farm and was then casting about for something to do, or at least waiting on Providence to find it for me. I was my own master, and had my little fortune (none so poor either for a yeoman's son) snugly in keeping of our notary, Master Kentish of Bristol town.

As I stood idly by the harbour side watching the shipping, of which there was great store, a seafaring man laid a hand on my shoulder and laughed.

"Why!" said he, "'tis Jack Lanscombe, as I live!"

'Twas a man from my own countryside, who had left it as a youth and had been seen there but seldom since. He was older than I, yet fairly within my memory, so that, looking round, I said quickly enough, "'Tis Dick Varney grown a man!" and then we shook hands. I told him how it was with me, and his eyes narrowed (though I scarce remarked it then) as he clapped me on the back and said he'd put me in the way of bettering myself if I wished.

"Hark 'ee, Jack," he cried, for though his father was no yeoman, and mine had been, yet he himself was full master's mate, "there lies the *Duke* and I'm mate in her. We are one of three who go on the King of Spain's business by to-morrow's tide. There's more smuggling between French Martinique and Peru than suits the Spaniards, and we go to stop it. The pay is good, but the chances are better——" and here he spoke low and winked knowingly. "Come with us. I need a proper man, and you'll be a sailor in a week, or——" and he swore more than I liked, but I thought it seaman's manners, so let it pass.

To cut short my tale, I went aboard the *Duke*, a gentleman volunteer.

We went down with the tide next day and came to anchor in deep water by the river's mouth, the *Duke* and *Duchess* only, our companion being delayed getting in stores. As we came down I had time to look about me. We were a ship of about 450 tons, and mounted thirty guns of a size more than sufficient for our purpose, and we had already some ninety men of our company aboard. "A tidy ship enough!" thought I proudly, the water being then calm. But alas! it blew freshly outside, and, what with the queer motion and the sea smells, that evening saw me idle in my hammock, none so proud either of the *Duke* or myself.

Full two days later I stumbled on to the upper deck, dazed with my long sickness (whose duration I did not guess) and half blind from the inner darkness. On the poop I found Dick Varney, who waved me to him with a smile.

"Well, Jack! So 'tis all over," said he, grinning.

"Why, yes!" I answered, thinking of my sickness. "And well over too," at which he laughed boisterously and squared his shoulders. Then he fell to pacing the poop and said no more. I felt all at sea, but was far from guessing the truth, though I thought Varney's manner strange enough, especially his laughter.

"Where is the *Duchess*?" I asked at last.

"Off Bristol, Jack, unless I'm far out," replied Varney; then, seeing me more than ever in a maze, he added, "Drop down with me, Jack, and you shall hear a fine tale." So I followed him to the master's quarters, where he poured me a glass of rum, and began.

"'Tis a short tale and a lively one," he said, "and I hope you'll like it. Two nights since, forty men from the *Duchess* deserted to the *Duke*, and we got under way in quick time. Most of my own boys stood by me, though every man of them had his chance to leave."

"How 'leave'?" said I, "and what of your captain?"

"Over the side, my lad, and safe ashore long ago!" laughed Varney. "The master went like a lamb, being hardly recovered from his leave-taking liquor. I am master of the *Duke* now, with nothing astern to touch me. Do you like the tale, Jack, for I hope you do? Think it over—'good wages and better chances'."

So I sat down to think of this thing, and before long had wit enough to know that Dick was a pirate by choice, and myself like to be no better, by evil chance.

By this time we were in mid-ocean for anything a landsman could do, so I sought something to eat, and, when thus fortified, must up and have it out with Varney; but when I found him bent on despoiling only our enemies, and then in fair fight, I fell in with the venture heartily enough, which pleased our captain vastly. Indeed, the venture was regular enough after a fashion, for if ever we saw Bristol town again 'twould be after his Spanish Majesty, whose servants we were, had paid for the *Duke*,

and none could rightly say we had robbed any Bristol man.

II

Dick Varney steered his own course, but, in spite of his brave words, we had most pestilent bad luck, so that long ere we sighted any vessel worth taking, far less a rich Frenchman, I had become as good a fighting sailor as any on board. We were now come to the Indian seas, and here Dick promised us full purses, for there was no little grumbling among the men. At more than one island, and once on the mainland, we had touched to replenish our water-butts and refill our larder; but nowhere had we been long out of the ship, nor had we seen the colour of gold since leaving home.

It happened, then, that of a hot, clear night, the ship moving quietly along and I asleep below the poop, a great cry got up all about me. "A vast ship becalmed half a league to larboard!" and, sure enough, I saw it plainly over the lee bulwark.

"'Tis a ship of the Great Mogul!" shouted Varney. "Down helm, there! To quarters, all of ye," he bawled, though we were unlikely to hang back after months of fret and disappointment.

But by this time, seeing the *Duke* as fast becalmed as the stranger, I was in a fair way to launch the smallest of our six boats, by throwing it over the side in my eagerness, had not the bos'n, Matt Willis, restrained me.

"Ecod! Master Lanscombe, we have sharks below and blackamoors above water," said he, "and both will be glad to see your way of launching a boat!" at which I fell back a pace. A moment later I was afloat and seated in the stern, the bos'n pulling hard with five others like himself, and our boat scarce above water with the press of men in her. Varney, in the greatest boat, was already ahead and three others ready to pass us, but though I shouted to the nearest to take me aboard, there being more room in her, I had to rest content with a place in the last boat of all. By this time the blackamoors had wakened up and were training a great gun upon us, and I had hardly time to wish their looks less heathenish by the light of a great torch, when a shot tore over our heads. At this our fellows set up a shout of anger, for we had counted on hand-to-hand work against odds, but not on gunnery, the Mogul's men being sad bunglers with cannon at sea. So we paused and drew out of range to tow the *Duke* up, and put the fight on more even terms. We pulled a full hour and then cast off after canting the ship for a broadside.

"Up with you, Jack and Willis, and stand by the guns, all of ye! One salvo, then after us to the boarding!"

We lost no time, but scrambled aboard our ship, now close by the Mogul. I know not which fired first, but from the tempest of smoke and noise, which half stupefied me, I heard a dreadful crashing of timber and a babel of shrieking cries. The *Duke* shook from stem to stern, and for a moment threatened to capsize. Men tumbled blindly over fallen spars, and cursed fiercely in the smoky darkness. From the Mogul came red spits of flame as they let fly with small arms and pistols. The voice of Tremaine, our master gunner, bellowed of a fallen mizzen and a mainmast gone, but whose they were I could not see. Then from the boats alongside Varney roared for boarders, and in the rush of men over to windward, making for the boats again, I was whirled against a deck-house. A great roaring sounded in my ears, something descended on my head, and I fell senseless to the deck.

When I came to myself I was alone; the smoke had cleared away, and our mizzen

mast floated astern. For a while I stared about me stupidly, wiping the blood from my face; but happening to hear a faint noise—for so it seemed—I looked over the side and saw Varney with our fellows, hard put to it on the stranger's poop. In a moment I remembered all. What guided me I know not, but a faint breeze was at last upon the *Duke*, so that I seized the wheel blindly and bore down straight before the wind to help my friends. The ships were no more than a cable apart, and in the press upon the stranger's deck it struck me that our company scarce showed at all. Dick Varney's voice rose now and then, and I could see Matt Willis plainly, but of the others little or nothing, and my heart sank. It seemed that all was lost, but I had no thought of holding back, for a madness took me then. To reach the Mogul and crush her with the *Duke's* bluff bows was my only plan, if plan I had. The breeze freshened and I held right on. Now, the accident to our mizzen mast had been clearly seen aboard the Mogul, so that when I bore down upon them, sailing free, it seemed that magic had replaced our mast and that a demon steered us. Seeing our onward rush, then, the blackamoors gave way in sudden terror (though I saw nothing of this), at which a wounded man of ours turned to find the cause.

"The *Duke*! The *Duke*!" he cried, and so quickly did things happen that almost as he spoke we were upon the Mogul's stern, with a sickening rending of her timbers and our own. For the second time that morning I fell, and when I opened my eyes again I was upon the lower deck, one arm broken and all my ribs sorely bruised.

. . . . . .

"When I heard Jack West of Bideford cry out, I thought him mad," said Matt Willis to me later; "but, seeing the blackamoors miraculously in retreat when we were all but overborne, I turned my head and saw the *Duke* coming hard at us. With that I hailed Master Varney, who quickly rallied all of us who could still stand upright, and in a body we prepared to board our ship as she struck."

"'Twas no small blow, Matt?" said I.

"Why, as to that, Master Lanscombe, 'twas a right English blow, and vastly more useful than most. The Mogul's men were over their fright by then and were about to rush us clear over his stern, when the old *Duke* took their feet from them, and before they could get at us we were on English oak again. Some few followed us, but the blow carried us past to leeward, and these caused us no trouble."

"What then?" I asked.

"Why, then we had time to look around," answered Matt uneasily.

"At what?"

"At murder, Master Lanscombe. We were a hundred and thirty out of Bristol, but only seventy out of the cursed Mogul, for we must needs leave our wounded. So one by one our lads, dead and living, were thrown to the sharks; for though the blackamoor had fore and mizzen down she was still four to one and thought herself safe."

"Curse you, Matt Willis!" shouted I, maddened by his tale. "Could you not fire a gun or bear up and board again?"

"Gently, gently! 'Tis paid for and more. 'Tis quicker to throw a wounded man overboard than to load and fire a gun. And the *Duke* was like to sink under us. But to go on! 'Twas useless to try boarding, so we lay-to and gave them gunnery till nightfall. At dawn our case was bad but theirs worse, and their ship at our mercy. She was vastly rich, too, and your share is worth a broken arm, or I'm mistaken."

So, being weary, I fell into a troubled sleep, and Matt Willis left me.

I sat staring for a full minute

"We gave them gunnery till nightfall"

III

'Twas some days before I saw Dick Varney, who was greatly busied with the task of carrying our broken ship to some quiet anchorage, where we might make good the ravages of war and refresh ourselves ashore, but at last he came to me.

He was vastly happy, and rallied me on my prospects of being a great squire in England one day; "for," said he, "we have a fortune apiece, Jack, and need but a good tree to get us home to spend it. There's an island not far off where we'll refit and share out. So get well, lad, for you'll be ashore in less than a week."

Truly enough, we came in four days to an island where fresh water and fruit abounded, and in a cove we ran the *Duke* ashore for repairs, though perforce I looked on, being still crippled. But first our men must have each his share of the Mogul's treasure, and, what with the tidy store of gold coin and jewels which fell to each and his part in goods to be carried to England, it was plain we were all made men. Indeed, my own share was worth my Bristol money thrice over, and nothing troubled me but the getting of it home.

You may be sure we took our leisure once the ship was new caulked and cleaned; but, having had enough of play at last, we set about getting a tree to serve as a mizzen mast, but none such was to be found on the island. 'Twas full five weeks since our landing, and my arm was well mended by then, so that I proposed to Varney and the rest to set off at once, taking our chance of finding suitable timber elsewhere. But to this Varney would by no means agree, but must have time to consider; "because," said he, "half our crew is gone, and how

are we to run wanting the great after-sail if we meet a fleet of two or three?" So we agreed upon a week's delay.

But first I must tell you that the Mogul had carried a prodigious quantity of precious stones, half of which, mostly great diamonds, Dick Varney had pocketed unknown to us, but more for easy concealment in case of danger, I think, than to cheat his comrades. However, he made sure that, even should his known portion be lost, he had a snug fortune left and nobody the wiser. So, not to weary you, three days after our council there arose a cry from those first afoot that the long-boat was missing, and very soon it appeared that our captain had vanished also.

"What make you of this, Master Lanscombe?" Matt Willis asked me, while John Stirton, who was mate in the *Duke* under Varney, shouted "Treachery!" In a moment every man rushed off to make sure of his money, and there was vast excitement with no little hard swearing; but on its appearing that Varney had taken even less than his share, we grew calmer.

"We look to you to command, and John Stirton to do our sailing," said Tremaine to me, after we had talked over the matter.

"Willingly!" said I; "but is it plain that as the ship is now we may never win home? You know what Varney's words were?"

"'Twas a trick to get away, naught else," swore Stirton, and most seemed of his opinion.

"Do we fight or run, then?" asked I.

"We fight when we must and run when we can," answered Matt Willis, at which there was great laughter.

"Aye, aye! Matt's right!" said a Devon man. "No risks now, for my part."

So it was settled, and, as soon as might be, we got the ship afloat, and set sail.

I would willingly tell of our voyage, of the storms we won through, of two attacks we beat off, of the island on which we landed and where Willis and I buried our spoil in secret rather than risk it in our ill-manned ship, but must hurry on to Bristol and so finish with Dick Varney.

IV

Months later Matt Willis and I sat in a quiet English inn, the *Duke* safely in harbour and her crew dispersed. We had money enough to serve our turn, and though the matter of our buried treasure was ever in our minds it did not press, and we relished shore life mightily.

It happened, then, that as we sat at ease before our inn one summer's day, a woman, ill-clad and none so young, came up, and, feigning to ask charity, slipped into my hand a letter, and was gone.

"What now?" said Matt (for we were hand in glove by reason of our secret as well as from true friendship). "A love affair, Jack, and never a word to me?"

"Far otherwise, Matt," said I, laughing, "'tis some news of my affairs from our old notary, doubtless, but we may very easily understand the matter," and I tore open the letter, which was scarce sealed. But I was far out of my reckoning indeed, for the letter came from the last man likely to write a *Duke's* man—Varney himself. So I sat staring for a full minute till my companion roused me with a hint. "'Tis from no lady, Jack. That I see, at least!"

"From *him*, as I'm alive!" I answered.

"What!" shouted Matt. "Impossible!"

"Nay, listen," and I read the letter. "Jack," it said, "though doubtless you bear me a sad grudge, yet read this. I wronged you in going as I did, though I took nothing but my own. Things have gone very ill with me since; make them no worse, but come to me at Mistress

Owen's hard by the Crown and Anchor. Or, if you will, say I am there and have me hanged for a pirate. In truth I care little either way.—D. V."

"What think you, Matt?"

"An ill-writ letter from a villain, say I," replied Willis promptly.

"Mayhap, but what to do?"

"Why! Go now."

So we got to our feet and turned towards the Crown and Anchor to seek Mistress Owen's lodging.

. . . . . .

The bearer of the letter led us to a vile garret, where there lay a gaunt skeleton of a man we scarce recognized for Dick Varney, though 'twas he. He expected me, but on seeing Matt Willis cried out in childish alarm, "that I had come to give him up".

"Nay," said I, "'tis but Matt Willis, and we do not come as enemies."

"Nor as friends, Jack?" at which I fell silent. "But come near," he went on. "There's little to tell. A hundred guineas for Dick Varney the pirate, dead or alive! I'm worth a hundred guineas to ye, Jack."

"Tush!" said I, nettled by both tone and words. "Was I to come for this, Dick Varney, or for some worthier purpose?"

"For another purpose, Jack," he answered more softly. "I see I wronged you again and ask your pardon."

"Granted!" said Matt, seeing me hesitate; for, though our late captain was plainly in dire straits, I scarce liked his past doings nor present manners.

"When I came to Bristol again," said the sick man, "I little knew what awaited me. 'Twas only the night saved me, for in haste to be rich I sought at once a merchant. 'A vast fortune, Master Varney,' said the oily rogue, 'and too heavy for my poor purse. Wait till I call my friends.' So four others came, and the five agreed very quickly upon a price, whereon my jewels were put into a little iron box and thrust into a cupboard. 'Here is our joint promise, Master Varney. Will you come in the morning for payment?' 'Nay, I'll wait here till then,' said I, thinking it safer. 'Well said, sir! but first read our promise,' and with that he thrust a paper into my hands. I will not deny that my hands shook as I took it from him, for here was wealth beyond a plain man's dreams, and all mine, Jack, mine! But even then I opened the paper slowly, not to be too eager before them. A printed form! thought I—these men buy fortunes daily then, and are too busy to put quill to parchment, but must needs have printed forms! What stillness there was as I unfolded the thing! What holding of the breath, what tenseness of waiting! A promise, said they? 'Twas a thing of heavy lines and thick black letters, and, as I saw it, the blood surged back to my heart, leaving my face like death. Oh, Jack, 'twas like a hundred deaths to understand it and all it meant! 'A hundred guineas for—' aye! for *me*—' dead or alive.' A cruel trick; but the old man, Lowson, grinned at me, and I heard him in a dream. 'You are well paid by our silence, Master Varney. We are well armed, though you *be* a pirate, but mayhap you would wish to call the watch. 'Tis passing now.'

"'Twas the thought of hanging stopt me, or I should have slain *him* at least where he stood. But to be wounded and taken! No! Better to wait—to wait! So I came out peaceably; but sickness came upon me here, for I was penniless and dared not show my face about the town. I used you ill. Will you use me better and lend me your help to get my own again?"

Matt and I looked blankly at each other, for you must think of Varney as helpless and half starved, the garret a miserable

hole, the bed no more than a heap of rags, while apart crouched a woman, sobbing. 'Twas his wife, she who had brought me his letter. Perhaps his misfortunes moved us, or pity for his wife, or perhaps 'twas anger at the base trickery of the goldsmiths, but I vowed offhand to restore the jewels.

"And I vow to try," said Matt Willis, which minded me that he was the wiser man of us, for the thing was easier to enter upon than to finish with credit.

V

At our inn that night, and many others, we talked of the affair, but 'twas long ere we hit upon any plan that promised success —so long, indeed, that I began to despair. But first we sent Varney and his wife in a fishing-boat to Ireland, for he might do us great harm if taken by the officers.

"Hark 'ee, Jack," said Matt at last, "'twas a crime to trade with Dick Varney, knowing him a man wanted by the law?"

I nodded.

"Then old Lowson is in no better case than Varney if we but wink to the thief-takers?"

"True, Matt, but that would scarce help."

"With some chalk on your face and a rag over one eye, could ye play the officer, Jack, and so help him?"

"Play the officer——?" stammered I, but in a moment I had grasped Matt's hand and was shaking it heartily, for here was a plan at last.

"Aye! Go boldly in, summon the old rascal, all atremble at your fierceness, and walk out with the diamonds!"

"And if he refuse to tremble at my fierceness, what then?"

"Pshaw! We need but a way of retreat and no small impudence, and the thing is done," replied Matt, none too graciously.

It seemed a likely venture; 'twas a dangerous one for certain, but 'twas neck or nothing with us by then; so we got two horses snugly hid on the far side of Bristol river, and at its mouth a sturdy boat ready for sea. A dark night, and a moonless, it was, when we quitted the inn, and we were scarce away from it when we vanished from the earth, as it were, and in our places stood an officer of the law and his servant. I doubt we were little credit to our master, but that would only serve the better to frighten old Spindleshanks.

We came boldly enough to his door, whereon we knocked loudly, which was all in the game. Very soon Master Lowson's head appeared at an upper window, and I called to him to descend and open, which he flatly refused to do. "All atremble, Matt!" whispered I. "Listen to him!"

"Off with you, thieves, or I call the watch!" and by a most unlucky chance the watch was heard approaching at that very moment. Here was a to-do! To be discovered in disguise before a rich man's door would be mightily awkward, for 'twas plain that Master Lowson fancied our company very little, and was ready to say so.

Not an idea could I summon to our help! Matt too looked sadly put out, and I think we might have turned and run for it had he not suddenly gone mad, as I thought. "Ho, there! The watch!" he bellowed, then quickly whispered to me: "A bold face, if you love me, Jack!"

To the first watchman, who came up just then, he cried very boldly: "You, there, my lad! Here's resistance to the law!" on which the watch looked less than happy, and Master Lowson appeared at his door.

"In the name of the law, Master Lowson, a word with you," said I, pulling myself together and stepping into the house. Matt spoke to the watch again, so that when I said that none must leave

the place, no one questioned my order.

" A word apart, Master," then, leaning close, I said our captain's name very softly.

" I know of no such man," replied Lowson gamely, but his pale lips belied him.

" But you come to London with me, nevertheless," said I.

Now, when I saw that he looked sourly at me, then cunningly, I laughed inwardly.

" Sir, I am an old man; give me time to prepare," he said at last.

" One hour, no more!" said I, scowling. " Dismiss the watch, Master Lowson, and make haste." So Matt remained by the street door while, as I guessed, Master Lowson escaped at the back, being in no mind to go with a man who carried things so high. Before long I called him, but there was no reply.

" Hist, Matt!" said I, beckoning him to me, " to work!" but 'twas child's play then. The cupboard might have bothered us, but 'twas plainly to be seen in the wall close by me, while on a little table lay the old man's keys. Never was anything easier! We found the box, nay the very key for it too, and, as we turned to leave the room, I chuckled quietly over our monstrous good fortune. When at last we were fairly out of Bristol town, and safely come to our waiting horses, I laughed loud and long.

" The old fox has gone to earth fairly enough!" said I.

" Squarely beaten at his own game!" returned Matt, also laughing.

" A rare plan and rarely kept up, friend! 'Twas a great stroke to call the watch," and so we mounted, each vastly pleased with himself and the other. Nor did we give a thought to the keys.

Being the better horseman I held the jewel-box on the saddle before me, riding slowly, for the night was inky black now. We jested as we rode, for dawn was still far off and we could not sail before daylight.

We had come to a turn of the road, perhaps a mile from Bristol, a dark place under great trees with thickets on either hand, when Matt's horse suddenly stopt, it being close ahead of mine. 'Twas too dark to see, but I cried to put the beast forward, when on the instant we were beset by four or five sturdy ruffians armed with cudgels, who sprang swiftly from the darkness about us. They came on with fearful yells, and were upon us so quickly that I could fire only one pistol, and then, flinging myself to the ground, was in the thick of a desperate encounter. It seemed to me that I alighted full on a man's chest —so my pistol had done some work, but it was not enough. We were hopelessly outnumbered, and, though I fought my best and heard more than one curse and a groan or two, it ended for me, as for Matt, with a blow on the head not to be resisted.

'Twas still dark when I came to myself. No sound broke the stillness, but very slowly I came to know that I lay in the road, sore all over and coated with mud. I staggered to my feet, but quickly fell over the body of a man close by. 'Twas Matt, still senseless. How long he took to come round I know not, but at last we raised ourselves and compared notes. Both badly bruised, our horses disappeared, our pistols gone and the jewels with them. For a while we sat still, stunned anew by this calamity.

" What think you of our plan now, Jack?"

" We crowed too soon, lad," said I; " but heard you anything before you fell?"

" That did I! Old Spindleshanks crying them on."

" Oh, Matt, Matt!" cried I bitterly, " only a fool would have been trapped so easily. Yet I laughed when I saw his keys so ready to our hands!"

" How now?"

"Why! Lowson took a shrewd course—let us take the jewels and he could get them again without danger, as he has done, for an officer of the law may not steal, even from a rogue. Let us leave them, and he lost to the law that which cost him nothing, but kept his liberty. Aye, the keys spoke plainly to any but a fool."

"Let's to the boat, lad, for rest and food. 'Tis a bad business and Varney will die of it; but tell him we must."

So we set out, and at dawn threw off our strange clothes, washed, and sat down to eat.

"And so, an end to Varney's fortune!" said I.

. . . . . .

"Confound you for a soft-hearted fool, Jack!" said Matt angrily. "'Give me a passage,' quoth he, and because of a long face Master Lanscombe ships a passenger!"

We were bowling down channel before a brisk wind, Matt at the tiller, I minding the sheets, and, amidships, a stranger, woefully sick.

"Tush!" said I, "he pays for his place and troubles no one."

"Be you surgeon, then, and put his bundle under his head before he choke," growled Matt.

So, giving the mainsheet a loose turn and handing it to the helmsman, I stepped forward to ease our passenger. A hard pillow, thought I, and set about loosening the bundle. 'Twas half undone when the sick man opened his eyes and saw what I did, but he would have none of me as surgeon or nurse. Instead, he gave a furious shriek and fell upon me, all unprepared as I was, like a very madman. And mad in truth he looked. With both hands he grasped the bundle, his greenish-pale face, aflame with anger, thrust against my breast—for I knelt beside him. Now, partly to avoid being thrown back by him and partly through being wholly surprised, I clung to the bundle, though 'twas the last thing I coveted just then, and in a flash felt a set of teeth fasten on my left hand like a vice. Blindly enough I pushed my opponent from me till, half mad with pain, I let go and gave him my right fist full in the face with all my strength, on which we rolled over to leeward together in a heap. But the fight was over, as well it might be, and I free to wash and tend my hand, after which I made no scruple about opening the stranger's bundle. 'Twas only a coat and a little box, but as I saw the box I shouted in very joy, for in my hands lay Dick Varney's diamonds.

"'Twas I and four others who attacked you on the Bristol road, though ye were sheriff's men then who now are sailors," said the stranger, when at last he could speak. (He paused and heartily cursed us and our disguise, the darkness of the past night, and the horrid chance that led him to our boat.) "I had no mind to restore Master Lowson's box, though, if I could get it for myself. Your pistol helped me, for as I stooped to grasp the box, scarce believing my good fortune to find it so pat at the very outset, it seemed as if I fell with a bullet through my head. But I was unhurt, and had time to throw my prize well across the road ere I got a mighty blow in good earnest and lay still enough. When I awoke I lay beneath a tree some distance from the road, plainly left for dead. All was quiet. The box lay where I had thrown it, and I hastened with it towards the sea. The rest you know."

So by strange ways his jewels fell at last into our hands; yet in the end we failed to right him, for Dick Varney and his wife never reached Irish land or any other, nor came with outstretched hands to meet us there.

Concerning Rugby Football

By E. H. D. Sewell

Though there is nothing new in Rugby football about which to write, the fact that it is the most magnificent form of exercise for able-bodied males between thirteen and thirty gives the subject a peculiar interest always. The certainty, too, that concerning no such widely played game do opinions regarding various points of play and tactics differ more sharply, inclines one to believe that the writing of an enthusiast will have something interesting in it, whether one agrees with what he says or not. Conversation about the sport, too, is apt to be stimulating. Take a stay-at-home Scot (if there is such a thing) and a ditto Englishman, set them to discuss the Rugby game, and you may confidently expect something of a row before very long.

The reason for this is that Southerners think they have advanced in knowledge of the game, have developed its possibilities more fully than have dwellers beyond the Border. Being much more of a Scot than an Englishman I wish I could think the latter had not right on his side, but every year I see proofs to the contrary, which convince me beyond all doubt that Scottish Rugby—club Rugby especially—is not progressing as it should progress.

I am aware of the existence of a school of thought in Scotland which holds that the present Rugby of England and Wales is a debased Rugby, a spurious imitation of the stuff which the grand forwards of " Caledonia, stern and wild " made famous in bygone days when Scotland won most of her International Championships. They hold that, until Scottish club Rugby returns to the genuine old forward game of her glorious past, she will continue to be humbled. Unhesitatingly I tell them they are wrong, and add that if the clubs will go resolutely for the " open " game, which so many Scottish schools practise successfully, Scotland will lead the way again sooner than ever she will by resorting to what I might also term, and without any offence, her prehistoric footwork methods.

Developments in the South tend much less towards dribbling rushes now than they did when in turn M. C. M'Ewan, Mark Morrison, and the late " Darkie " Bedell-Sivright were king. These developments have found counters to such intractable and uncertain methods of taking the ball over the goal-line, and with a rapidity and a certainty almost unknown two decades ago convert defence from such attacks into a threatening attack of their own in a manner which " kills " footwork as a scoring factor.

The Scottish schools are inclining to the open game, but, directly former pupils arrive in club football, they seem to be engulfed in the old tradition for making a match a matter of interest to the two packs of forwards only and let the backs fish for themselves. Such a policy cannot hope to produce Macleods and Sutherlands, and Simsons and Munros, though the peerless Pat was not a product of Scottish school or club Rugby, and never played

or shaped like anything but an English schoolboy, as indeed he was.

In this matter of policy I believe the Scottish authorities north of the Cheviots do not see quite eye to eye with their equally keen compatriots in London and the South. Seeing's believing, and the latter observe week after week how the open game beats the other game, and realize how it must always do so, other things being equal. Even on wet days, of which Caledonia is reputed to get her share, a single pass held at the critical moment suffices to win a match, and it is all utter fallacy for teams to make it purely a forward game wholly and solely because it happens to be a wet day. Wales is no drier a country than South Scotland, but long ago they recognized there that a wet ball is more safely carried over a goal-line and touched down than a similar ball ever can be dribbled and fallen upon at the right moment. Therefore do I most strongly counsel every captain of every Scottish school fifteen and every junior and senior team to pay heed to the "distinguishing feature" of the Rugby game, which William Webb Ellis made historic some ninety-nine years ago at Rugby School. What did he do? He "first took the ball and ran with it . . ."

That was in 1823.

Still the "distinctive feature" is the handling of the ball, and, even though the game be football, Scottish Rugby does not pay the heed it should to the feature which other Rugby-playing countries are developing and continuing to develop, admitting no finality until the danger has arisen that all fifteens will be composed, sooner or later, of halves and three-quarters with no forwards at all. That this is no fancy picture a remark in Lieut.-Col. W. S. D. Craven's interesting chapter on the "Forward Game" in my book, *Rugby Football up to Date*, of which I am selfish enough to hope every Scottish schoolboy has a copy, tends to prove. He says:

"In several of the leading English and Welsh club teams the fastest or almost the fastest man on the side is a forward. I might mention here C. H. Pillman of Blackheath, H. Uzzell of Newport, and W. W. Wakefield, R.A.F. and Quins."

This was certainly not the way that the former England captain, Lieut.-Com. N. A. Wodehouse, R.N., solved a problem he was faced with during the war. Transferred to a new boat, what more natural for a gunnery lieutenant, after seeing that all his guns were nice and clean and the ammunition handy, than to suggest Rugger. But none of the crew had ever touched a Rugger ball. So he bundled about forty of them into boats, rowed to the nearest island, made them run a hundred yards race, shoved the last twenty into the scrum, and turned the others into backs, thus starting the Rugby game, rough and readily but heartily, in prosperous soil.

I may lay myself open in the course of this paragraph to a charge of preaching heresy, especially among out-and-out disciples of the traditional Scottish forward game, a return to which my old friend Mr. C. D. Stuart so fervently desires for Scotland and her hefty Rugger. But I risk that, for, though the beauties of a clean wheel and a good dribbling rush have no greater admirer than the writer, I must say that I am equally enamoured of a properly executed passing advance in which forwards share the honours with their backs.

I would lay it down as a maxim in all school Rugby: "Pass in your own 25". In other words I would for ever abolish the rule, born of dulness and a lack of enterprise, which says: "Never pass in your own 25". Down in the South I have heard, and read, of this passing in your

own 25 described as "the Harlequin game"; as though the Harlequins (in whose jersey I had the honour of passing in my own 25 some years before A. D. Stoop or any of the constellations of the scoring Harlequins teams of 1906–13 era had even so much as arrived at a Public School) were the inventors of this form of attack. But getting on for forty years ago we scored tries at Bedford School from our own 25 without ever being punished in print for our temerity. Yet, in 1906–8, when the Harlequins compelled English Rugby to wake up and let the ball have some fresh air now and then, this method was everywhere described as a novelty. It is even to this day generally stigmatized as "greatly daring", and is roundly condemned when, owing to the clumsiness of one player, it fails to come off, and as loudly acclaimed as setting the seal on the fame of a side when it succeeds. As a matter of fact, as you will see if you plot it out in diagram form, scarcely anywhere in the game during a scrum is the "set" of the opposing backs so favourable for the clear start of a passing advance as it is for the side which is in its own 25. In 1907 Wales scored one of their many tries against Ireland at Cardiff from a scrum within a few feet of their line; Bush, their stand-off, being many yards inside his own in-goal when he received the initial pass from David, his scrum-half.

For success two things are essential, viz. sang-froid and hands. These, supported by the speed of foot usually to be found on a school three-quarter line, and its necessary adjunct, quick wit, suffice. Such an attack is no more daring and much less foolish, certainly braver, than that futile short kick over a full back's head, which is so wildly indulged in by the attacking player in a face-to-face encounter with a single defender, whom the attacker should always be able to outmanœuvre without letting go of the precious ovoid.

I always envy Scottish schoolboys, because they have such a pull over their English and Welsh compeers in that they are able to see more international matches. Especially is this the case with Edinburgh boys. Not all English schools have a whole holiday on Saturdays, and except St. Paul's, Dulwich, and Merchant Taylors none of the recognized homes of the Rugby game is so conveniently situated as to enable boys to get to Twickenham, where for some years past international games have been played, and where, from what I hear, many future games will be played. Though I was at school under an hour from London, I never saw an international match while a boy. Of course, it was better from a purely physical standpoint that we should be playing instead of watching, but so much is to be gained from intelligent observation of good players in action that the pupils at all the Edinburgh schools have a distinct advantage over their rivals who are brought up elsewhere.

From an inquiry received quite recently from a youngster who is dead keen on gaining his school colours—and the very best of luck go with him, for a healthy, sound, outdoor boy generally grows up into a sane citizen—I gather that the omission from my book, *Rugby Football up to Date*, of anything about training has been commented upon at one Public School at least. I must cry "*Peccavi*", but my excuse is, I hope, a reasonable one, viz. that all keen Public School boys are always naturally fit. My view is that they are not keen if they are not fit, and if they are not keen they are rather a handicap to a school team. If I dislike any one of my fellow mortals it is he, whether boy or man, who is not really keen on whatever game or sport he goes in for. The half-and-half

or the lackadaisical fellow in games becomes in life a most unreliable person, as a general rule; consequently school captains should do all in their power to keep the slacker brigade up to the mark. A boy who is keen is always fit, because by instinct he does not eat too much, or, which is equally important, drink too much, and of course he never smokes. In a general way there need be no training for a healthy and keen youngster in the way of avoiding food except to keep off pastry and sweets. They are fatal to success in games, but otherwise, normal helpings, a good appetite, plenty of sleep in well-aired rooms with the window open at night—the sleeper out of a draught of any kind—is a course which comprises nothing that would prevent a boy from getting his school colours for lack of physical fitness.

I wrote just now of the need for avoiding excess in drink, and I will try to illustrate what I mean by means of a note on a shooting incident in India. A friend of mine was out in camp and happened to fetch up one evening at a traveller's bungalow, in the vicinity of which were many wild blue Rock pigeon, which nested in the crevices of the big black rocks of a hill hard by. The birds had to pass the bungalow on their return to roost, and they offered some pretty shooting. My friend, who happened to be a very keen naturalist, was astonished at the difficulty experienced in killing and at the amount of shot a blue Rock would take and fly away with, apparently uninjured. He made some remark to his old *shikari* to that effect, and the old man replied: "Yes, Sahib, they are very strong; but *they drink only once a day*." That is the secret of hardness, and every young athlete cannot do better than remember this illustration from nature, for it is tolerably sure that many athletic failures are partly caused by softness due to too much liquid, of whatever kind; it does not matter whether tea, water, or something more lively.

And here let me advise all school captains in a matter in which they are rather loth to act, generally from the best of motives. They do not like to hurt a fellow's feelings, but that is what to do when the day of an important match comes round and one of the team, who is essential to its success, happens to be partly "crocked". Some say that whether or no a partly fit player should take part in the game is a point to be left to the player himself. I do not hold that view, because though no honourable boy would say he is fit to play when he is not, thereby jeopardizing his school's chance, still it is possible that he might report fit for fear of being considered as letting his side down, or, worse still, as a funk, for not turning out. It is for the captain to behave as a captain, and that is to command. Part of his duty as a captain is to study his team and to know the character of each player. If he does this, he will have a fairly good idea whether a player is malingering or whether, from a mistaken idea of loyalty to his side, he is turning out while really unfit to do so. I have seen a 'varsity match lost because a good player was allowed to play though not recovered from a muscle injury; and Scotland was largely aided to a win in a certain Calcutta Cup because an English forward reported fit and then barely lasted twenty minutes, being in the way for the rest of the game but not badly enough broken down for his captain to order his retirement. So, in this matter, a school captain should be absolutely relentless in refusing to admit any player who is suspected of not being thoroughly fit to stay the full thirty-five or forty each way. It is mistaken kindness to include a player about whose staying

power a captain has any legitimate doubt.

In conclusion I should like to impress upon boys the absolute necessity for concentration of thought (out of school hours, of course) upon their game. A Rugby match does not begin at 2.15 and end at 3.30. It begins when you wake up and have said your prayers, and it ends during those valuable thinking moments after "lights out" before Morpheus claims the healthily tired youngster. Nobody is ever too old to learn something about the game, and the fact should be borne in mind that a school captain at the time he leaves school is only just beginning to grasp the ABC of football.

I want school captains and members of school fifteens to realize that the most important position in the game is at half. No side can win matches if its halves are poor performers. On the other hand, a moderate pack and a moderate three-quarter line, if they play the right game, can win against a good all-round side if their two halves are good players. Only a day or two ago I saw Hampshire with a ragged pack, and quite an ordinary line of three-quarters, beat Kent 23 points to 7 simply and solely because of this and the play of the English halves, C. A. Kershaw and W. J. A. Davies. During the first twenty minutes Kent were "all over" their opponents. I was seated next to a very keen army doctor who lives in Hampshire, and was naturally enough not backing Kent. He looked anxious, so I ventured the remark: "It'll be a funny game if Kershaw and Davies don't win this comfortably for you." Davies got three tries himself and had a hand in two more, one of which was led up to by a short punt (instead of a pass) by Kershaw to Davies. Yet the Kent pack got the ball five times to Hants two, and in every branch of forward play outplayed Hants, except at the line-out, where the two eights were level. School captains must therefore concentrate on having good halves, and should resolutely forego strength at three-quarter if it is necessary to do so in order to secure that end. What I mean by this is that, supposing a captain, who is a forward, has A, a fairly good scrum-worker; B, a moderate stand-off half; and C and D, a strong left-wing pair, of whom D is an especially fast runner; what use is D to the side as long as there is an unreliable link in the chain at B? It would be better to rearrange forces by putting D to play stand-off, trying B at left-centre, and sending the experienced and good C out to left wing—or by making B and C change places so that C at stand-off may still keep up his partnership from stand-off half direct with D.

Whatever the disposition of their forces captains must aim more and more at having their greatest strength at half. I remember that a few years before the war Edinburgh Academy had a great season, which, on the strength of what I saw of them in a game with Watson's, was, ninety per cent of it, due to their stand-off half, the late F. J. Christison.

Another point to lay stress on is to choose for full back the boy who can catch and kick *always*, in preference to the boy who can tackle but cannot catch. A bad fielder in that position gives away far more tries and loses far more matches than does a player who cannot tackle. This is a Rugby football truth not everywhere admitted, but nothing can alter its steadfastness. Finally, play to the whistle, play the game, and leave talking and shouting until afterwards. The best football teams are the silent ones; they use their breath for its legitimate purpose.

The Boiling Pool

By Thompson Cross

The Chief Commissioner for the Aruwimi district of the British Congo paused in his feverish stride across the stifling veranda. His tanned face, in the shadow of his big pith sun-helmet, was drawn and stern.

"It is a catastrophe," he said slowly. "The man was the most dangerous criminal in the Convict Settlement. And he has got clear away, leaving not so much as a footprint behind him. If he reaches his tribe, he will set them aflame, and there will be the biggest flare-up of rebellion the Congo Basin has known. I would give half a dozen years of my life to have him in my hands again."

Captain Philip M'Bean, of the Zoological Supply Company of Europe, Limited, rose from his creaking cane chair, and stretched his lean and lanky body.

"I reckon it *is* a catastrophe," he said, in the cool and slightly drawling voice which came to him now and then, "but I'm rather in a fog. I'd like to hear just exactly what has happened."

He stared with his sunny blue eyes through the mosquito-netting that meshed the Commissioner's bungalow to the quivering picture of tropical forest beyond. In the dead silence that followed, Jack Chilcot, the youngest hunter in the employ of the Zoological Supply Company of Europe, Limited, could hear the shrill chatter of the macaques and the squawk of parakeets in the thick foliage that stretched like a deep green sea beneath the sapphire sky.

The Chief Commissioner dropped heavily into a chair, and tugged nervously at his grey moustache.

"It's this, then," he said. "I'll give you the story short and sweet. In the middle of the river, some five miles upstream, is a small, rocky island which the Toro people—the tribe of this district—call the Island of Devils. I have transformed it into a convict settlement for all my criminals—a kind of slush-heap for all the thieves, rebels, traitors, and murderers in the few thousand square miles I control. There they cultivate their maize patches, and brood upon their past sins. A strong guard of Swahelis looks after them, the river runs past in a fierce and unbroken current, and the only access to the island is by means of a drawbridge which I have constructed. Some of the prisoners of the Island of Devils are as cunning and fearless as wild beasts, for this was German territory before the war, and the German colonist usually turns his natives into animals. But not a single one has ever escaped—until now."

Phil M'Bean and Jack Chilcot watched the Commissioner as he paused. The quivering silence of the equatorial jungle seemed to creep into the room.

"Yharo is the fellow's name," the Commissioner's voice came again, speaking slowly. "He was medicine man of the Wanzamezis, a warlike and truculent tribe who live a hundred miles down the river; not the wizened and monkey-like creature such as medicine-men usually are, but a

big, bronze giant of nearly seven feet. He was by far the most dangerous criminal on the island, as fierce as a wolf and cruel as a jackal. I shudder to think of some of the crimes which Yharo has committed. By rights he should have been publicly beheaded before a jamboree of all the tribes. But I dared not do it. Beyond half a dozen white men and a few hundred Swahelis, I am alone here. The death of Yharo would have brought the Wanzamezis like flies upon us. And now he has escaped—which is worse!"

"Worse?" repeated M'Bean.

Mr. Hartley, the Commissioner, nodded.

"He will go back to the Wanzamezis, and set them on fire. Somewhere in the jungle he has a hidden hoard of stolen ivory. He had attacked and murdered the convoy which was taking it to the coast. We have searched for the *cache* for weeks in vain. But Yharo will find it and dispose of it to Arab traders for arms and ammunition. The Aruwimi district will be the hottest spot in the Congo within a week's time. You two Nimrods will find that snaring live lions is tame sport compared with what is coming."

Mr. Hartley smiled grimly. He rose and moved into the sun-blinded doorway.

"There's a score of search-parties beating the district for Yharo already," he said. "I'll go and turn out another dozen, if you'll excuse me. But Yharo had four hours' start. When we see him again, it will be at the head of a few thousand Wanzamezis armed with Schneiders and Lebels."

The Commissioner vanished.

"Cheerful!" Jack Chilcot said, with a faint grin.

Phil M'Bean took out his pipe, and tapped it thoughtfully on the heel of his hunting-boot. He was lean and brown and hook-nosed, and deeply wrinkled about the eyes, though he was barely twenty-five. Jack Chilcot was a youngster of no more that seventeen, with a clear skin that was burnt black with the sun, and hair as light as flax.

"I don't think capturing mad ju-ju men comes into our agreement with the Zoological Supply Company of Europe, Limited, Jack," M'Bean said, half thoughtfully, "but I'd like fine to send a hippopotamus harpoon into this Yharo's hide, and tow him back in triumph to the Island of Devils. It would save a lot of unnecessary trouble."

Chilcot grinned, and then was serious. M'Bean and himself had pursued their unusual vocation with profit and interest in the Aruwimi district during the past few months. They were trappers and captors of live animals, beasts, birds, and reptiles; part of the corps of seasoned naturalists and huntsmen which the Zoological Supply Company of Europe, Limited, had in every tropical country. Mr. Hartley had treated them, with their half a hundred followers, hospitably. If it came to a scrap, it would be up to them to stand by him, of course. Personally, Chilcot rather hoped that the scrap would come.

M'Bean rose slowly. His long, loose figure seemed to fill the veranda.

"In the meantime," he said, "we'll go down to the Boiling Pool and look at the pitfalls."

. . . . . .

The Boiling Pool lay in the deep gloom of the African jungle beneath a vast outcrop of ironstone rock that rose like a great island from the green foam of palm and liana. It was a backwater of the rapid-flowing river where the water spun like a whirlpool; a large, rocky cauldron that boiled sluggishly and sullenly between the orchid-splotched edge of the jungle and a precipitous wall of ironstone. Even when the blue sky of noon glared above, it was a dark and sombre spot.

Night was falling when M'Bean and Chilcot reached the Boiling Pool. The last daylight was pouring out of the tropical blue sky, and a big moon brightened slowly overhead in a field of glittering stars. The Boiling Pool lay in deepest shadow. The quavering laugh of a hyena and the soft, coughing roar of a hunting jaguar came faintly above the sound of its restless water.

In silence the two Britishers crouched in the deep marsh-grass. The three pitfalls had been carefully set at the edge of the Boiling Pool. They consisted of two deeply dug pits, carefully and cunningly covered by a thin floor of turf and branches. Between them a dead buffalo had been placed. Presently, with the rise of the moon, some lioness, coming with her cubs to drink at the Boiling Pool, would scent the bait, and drop into one of the pits, leaving her cubs for M'Bean and Chilcot to pick up—if the night were a lucky one.

The jungle darkness closed abruptly around them. The rising moon threw silver lacings through the web of undergrowth, and shone pallidly on the foam-flecked surface of the Boiling Pool where it murmured hoarsely. Whilst keenly alert to every faint sound about him, Chilcot's thoughts clung curiously to the Wanzamezi medicine-man. Where had he *cached* his stolen ivory? And had he yet lifted it and taken it to the Arabs to buy arms for his tribe? Though Chilcot's was a happy-go-lucky character, Mr. Hartley's grave face haunted him uneasily.

The touch of M'Bean's strong fingers on his sleeve made him start.

" Look!" M'Bean said, in a whispered grunt.

The faintest crackle sounded in the gloom near the water. Jack Chilcot's pulse leapt queerly. Something was moving stealthily, half bent, by the edge of the Boiling Pool. For an instant Chilcot thought, bewilderedly, of a vast gorilla. Then he saw that it was a human being. It stood out for a moment in a glinting patch of moonlight, and, clear as on a cinema screen, they saw the black, shining body, dripping perspiration, the giant limbs, and herculean shoulders. More than all, they saw the great brutal head, with its ape-like face, thick, twisted lips, and white eyes.

" By crumbs!" Chilcot murmured. He felt spellbound. In one single flash of instinct, he knew that it was Yharo, the escaped convict of the Island of Devils, who stood there in the moonlight.

" Quiet, old man!" breathed M'Bean.

The stooping figure straightened itself and stood like a listening statue. Then, with a quick, lithe movement it began to creep towards the edge of the Boiling Pool. Chilcot held his breath suddenly as he realized that Yharo, the medicine-man, was walking straight upon the pitfalls.

He vanished in the long grass. Chilcot strained his ears for the crackle and crash of the crust of ground that covered the pitfalls. Without knowing it he had his hand upon the butt of the big Webley which hung in its holster at his belt. The dead silence of the forest seemed to have deepened.

Jack Chilcot turned his head slowly. The tips of the long spear-grass within half a dozen yards of where he and M'Bean crouched had moved slightly. Some animal was moving towards the brink of the pool —towards the desperate fugitive who was there. He heard the soft, ragged purr of a lioness, and, just for a moment, caught a glimpse of the great creature, with three two-months-old cubs sidling at her heels. She was moving towards the pitfalls, attracted by the scent of the dead bullock. A thrill of strange happenings made both Chilcot and M'Bean remain motionless. Unconsciously Jack Chilcot counted the

seconds of waiting silence to himself on his clenched fingers.

Suddenly an echoing roar that seemed to shake the moonlight came.

M'Bean sprang to his feet.

" They're in!" he said. " Both of 'em!"

The roar had come again, breaking off with a heavy crash and a whimper of terror. Side by side the two trappers ran through the deep glade towards the edge of the water, their feet sinking in the spongy ground. M'Bean's heavy automatic was in his hand.

" Look out!" snapped Chilcot.

It was black shadow on the brink of the Boiling Pool. They had stumbled upon the broken pitfall almost without seeing it. Then M'Bean's electric torch sprayed out a stream of bright light. It revealed a strange sight.

The jagged hole of the pitfall gaped widely at their feet. It was a square hole, fully twenty feet deep, which had taken a score of Swahelis two days to dig. Its sheer sides were shored with timber, and offered no hold to any beast trapped in it, to climb out again.

In this formidable pit, revealed by M'Bean's torch, a man and a lioness stood, watching each other, each crouching in extreme corners. The man, who was Yharo, the medicine-man, stood with his gleaming shoulders bent and his great hands crooked before him, like a waiting wrestler. The lioness—large, full-grown, and in the prime of wild life—crouched with her ears laid back, her tail twitching nervously, and her eyes like lanterns. Beside her, whining loudly, was one of her cubs. The other two stood at the edge of the hole, blinking stupidly at M'Bean's light.

" He's done!" Jack Chilcot said mechanically.

M'Bean lifted his weapon. In the very moment that he did so the lioness, recovering from the fright of her fall, sprang across the narrow space at Yharo with a grating snarl. It seemed to the two onlookers that her fangs must reach the black, bull-like throat before the man could move. Yet, swift as light, the Wanzamezi slipped aside and the beast crashed against the side of the pit, dropping back in a crumpled mass of yellow fur. In the second before she gathered herself, Yharo stabbed downwards with some long, jade-handled knife at her throat, sinking the weapon deep, and springing clear back against the wall as the animal flung round with her paw.

" Oh, good!" Chilcot said involuntarily.

Then, with a reverberation that shook the moonlit silence, M'Bean's automatic spoke twice in quick succession. When the blue film of smoke had floated clear, the lioness lay on the floor of the pit, motionless. Only Yharo, the medicine-man of the Wanzamezis, stood with his shaggy head thrown back, and his distorted face looking upwards with a mixture of fear and savage rage.

M'Bean spoke down in the Toro dialect.

" We know you, O Yharo! There is no further escape for you. Well you know that as I have slain the lioness, so shall you be slain if you attempt to escape. For your dead body is as good to the White Chief as your live one. Climb forth, and attempt no treachery."

Chilcot took the slender rope which, among other of their hunting paraphernalia, he carried. Yharo swarmed up it slowly, the rope held by the two chums. M'Bean's pointing weapon dogged him as he came from the pit.

" Death speaks quickly from this iron, O Yharo!" he said, dryly.

The wild, half-naked figure of the escaped convict crawled out into the pale light of the electric torch. He stood sullenly submissive. Yet something in his bloodshot

eyes made Jack Chilcot watch him closely.

" Suppose we shall have to rope him," M'Bean said. " If you'll pinion his arms, I'll keep him covered, Jack. Then we can march him back to Hartley. I guess he's the most valuable beast we've trapped so far."

Chilcot moved towards Yharo's giant figure. The man was standing at the very edge of the Boiling Pool, with the white-streaked water, lighted by the moonlight, as a background. His arms seemed to hang in fierce despair by his sides. Yet his eyes, their lids falling in ugly slits over their whites, seemed to hold treachery.

" No tricks!" Jack Chilcot began a little clumsily. " It's no use——"

He saw Yharo's naked muscles bunch, and tried to step back as the great body swooped down at him like a striking snake. But he was too late. Helpless as a child, he was swung upwards and held like a shield, his arms pinned to his sides. The voice of the Wanzamezi medicine-man boomed triumphantly.

" Kill now with your iron, O white fool!"

That much Chilcot, enclosed in the tremendous strength of the man, heard. Then he was hurled as though he had been a stone, through the air. He struck M'Bean with a crash that shook every bone within him, and together they rolled to the ground. Sick and stunned, Chilcot lay for a second. Then, like a douche of chilly water, cold rage swept over him. He staggered to his feet.

" Where—where is he?" he asked unsteadily.

He saw M'Bean sprawling in the deep grass for a moment, groping for his lost automatic which the contact had jerked from his hand. Then Chilcot sprang through the grey moonlight to the edge of the Boiling Pool. Upon a small fringe of dark rock Yharo stood, bending over a small dug-out canoe. At the very moment Chilcot reached the fringe of unquiet water, the little craft swung out of the covering reeds which had held it, and Yharo jumped agilely aboard.

" No, you don't!" Jack Chilcot grunted

It was a mad thing to do. But, just then, a curious wild anger was in Chilcot's heart, and he thought of nothing save the chance of capturing the escaped convict of the Island of Devils. He sprang with his teeth set tight and touched the bubbling water of the Boiling Pool feet first. Just as some unseen force seemed to catch him and tug at him wickedly, his fingers closed on the edge of the canoe.

" Come out of it, you beggar!" he said.

Yharo saw him, then, for the first time, and leaned over, his wild eyes blazing and his paddle upraised. The fragile canoe, already unbalanced beneath the hanging weight of Chilcot, was caught in an eddy of the sullen whirlpool at that instant, and overturned like a nutshell. Yharo struck the water near Chilcot and went deep.

Chilcot clung desperately to the overturned canoe which, a mere featherweight, still floated. The din of the Boiling Pool, the splash of its spray, and the fierce strength of its battling currents stunned him. Already he had been whirled far from the shadowy shore and seemed to be spinning through a cauldron of misty moonlight towards the great wall of ironstone cliff on the other shore.

Abruptly Yharo's black head, streaked with tails of hair, emerged from the water near by. By this time Chilcot had climbed half-way upon the overturned canoe. He clung grimly as Yharo was swept against the spinning craft.

A moment later both of them, young trapper and savage medicine-man, sat astride the frail boat. The poise of both of them alone balanced the canoe. Yharo, lean and savage-looking as a wolf, realized it. Jack

It was Yharo, the escaped convict

Neither of them dared to move an inch

Chilcot, watching him doggedly, realized it too. Neither of them dared to move an inch. If, once more, the Boiling Pool caught either of them, they would be swept towards its centre and drawn into the whirlpool that circled there.

Chilcot looked a little wistfully towards the shore. In the deep twilight of the palms and marsh-grass, he could see M'Bean's lamp like a firefly. But already the upturned canoe was half-way across the Boiling Pool. Beneath the bright stars, the massive face of rock rose blackly. The Boiling Pool surged in a white fringe at its foot. Presently they would strike the bottom of the cliff and be flung ashore.

"Suppose he'll kill me when we touch—as soon as he can get his hands on me."

The thought flickered through Jack Chilcot's brain. Quite clearly he knew that Yharo could kill him as a poacher kills a rabbit. He looked across at the black, fleshy bulk that bestrode the other end of the canoe. Yharo had turned his head and was watching the dark cliff of the opposite shore draw nearer and nearer.

"Wish I could—shove him off!" Chilcot muttered.

He felt with a sudden exultation at his revolver holster, only to experience a dull shock of disappointment. The pouch was empty. His weapon was probably at the bottom of the Boiling Pool. There was nothing except——

" By Jove!" Chilcot said, with a sudden jump of his heart. " I'll—syringe him."

It was the wildest hope that could have ever entered his mind. Yet it might succeed. In the ticklish work which Phil M'Bean and himself were engaged in for the Zoological Supply Company of Europe, Limited, all manner of delicate instruments were used. For instance, when young antelopes were captured alive, so great was their terror that they were almost at the point of death. To preserve their lives a strong narcotic was injected in their skin, which sent them into a stupor that lasted until they were safely caged. The same plan was used with lion and tiger cubs sometimes. In Jack Chilcot's pocket, at that moment, was a large syringe with the bulb fully charged. What if he could prick Yharo with it?

Chilcot stifled a wild desire to laugh. The canoe, spinning slowly, was drifting steadily towards the shore. Yharo's great hand, gripping the bottom of the canoe, lay within arm's reach. The sharp nose of Jack Chilcot's syringe crept towards the muscular forearm. Even as the medicine-man turned suddenly at the pricking sensation, the contents of the bulb went into his flesh.

Yharo scowled at Chilcot with an almost comical expression of fury, and rubbed his pricked skin.

" Jolly near, now!" whispered Jack Chilcot, looking at the shore.

He stared at Yharo intently. So far the drug, though the same quantity had sent a baby elephant to sleep, seemed to have no effect.

The canoe crashed against a fang of rock, grated over a beach of hidden shingle, and lashed through a trailing veil of bushes. Chilcot saw the black opening of a small cave in the mountain face that reared overhead. As the canoe slipped towards it he sprang.

He struck the narrow ledge, and hung for an instant, with the water plucking at him wickedly. Then, slowly, he pulled himself into the mouth of the cave and leaned against the wet rock, panting.

" Slipped him!" he breathed.

The words had barely left Jack Chilcot's lips when, along the ledge which ran from the mouth of the cave which he had reached, a black stooping shape came crawling. It was Yharo! He moved through the bright moonlight with a curious, unsteady gait, and within a yard of him dropped to his hands and knees with his great head rolling from side to side, and an expression of stupid amazement on his face. For a second the drugged man clawed at Chilcot's feet. Then abruptly he rolled on his side and lay, breathing noisily, in a deep sleep.

" Got him," Jack Chilcot said, with a laugh that hardly sounded like his own, " this time."

. . . . . .

When Phil M'Bean crossed the Boiling Pool by means of a slung rope an hour later, he found Jack Chilcot sitting among a pile of boxes and cases, with Yharo, the medicine man, securely bound, regarding him solemnly. For the cave was the hiding-hole in which Yharo had placed the hoard of ivory which he had stolen months before. When he had fallen into the pitfall he had been about to embark upon a current which, he knew, would take his canoe through the Boiling Pool to the cave.

Next day Yharo was safely under guard again upon the Island of Devils, and a relieved Chief Commissioner was pouring out his gratitude to Jack Chilcot and Phil M'Bean.

" Three lion cubs and an escaped convict," M'Bean said, with a smile at Jack Chilcot. " I guess it wasn't bad, old man!"

The Day of Reckoning

By H. MORTIMER BATTEN

Illustrated by Warwick Reynolds

I

It was very early one morning that Mr. Fairweather Field, owner of the prosperous Cupola Ranch, sent the range boss along to tell young Hanman Berwick he was wanted in the office, and Hanman, receiving the message, wondered what on earth he had done wrong. Why should the range owner send for *him*, of all men—the only Englishman in the outfit, and less than a year new to the country?

Mr. Field sat at his desk, sleeves rolled up, and smoking a black cigar despite the fact that breakfast had not been served. At his side, hatless and spruce as usual, sat his son, commonly known by the name of Teddy. He and Hanman were about an age, and they had become good friends owing to the fact that they had much in common—a love of sport, and of the great open ranges.

"Morning, Berwick," said the range boss. "Sit down." He placed his finger-tips together, and surveyed the young man over his huge gold-rimmed glasses. "Me and Teddy here," he resumed, with his usual disregard for correct English, "have been talking about opening up the new ranch at Sandyridge. As you know, we've got a nice little outfit knocked together up there, and I intend Teddy to go up this week and start running the place on his own. I've been asking him who he wants as a range boss, and he says yourself!"

At this juncture Hanman nearly dropped through his chair. He a range boss! Today he was merely a junior puncher, drawing a junior puncher's pay. Therefore he merely stared blankly and said

nothing, which was perhaps just as well.

"Personally I think it's unwise," Mr. Field went on, with brutal candour. "I had intended Teddy to have a much older man as foreman, but he points out that it's lonely up there, and that congenial companionship will count for a good deal. But mark my word, Berwick, no fooling about, hunting and the like. You'll have to work like blazes, and make the thing pay, otherwise you'll find yourselves up a gum tree. As to your own wages—you'll get your present pay guaranteed, but over and above that both of you will get a commission on your profits. Thus, if you do well, you'll make a good thing out of it, but your earnings will depend entirely upon yourselves. Now get out, both of you. Fix up everything, and come and report to me before you go."

Hanman was still speechless as they stumbled out together, and as the door closed behind them Teddy asked: "Well, what do think of it, old son?"

"I don't know what to think of it," Hanman answered. "I'm more indebted to you than I can say."

"Oh, well, cut it out!" Teddy advised. "Now let's get along and make out a list of what we shall require. It's going to be a long job and a ticklish one."

Mr. Field stood with his hands behind his back watching them from the office window as they crossed the compound. "Gad," he muttered, "I wish I were just starting life again, with my face towards the sunrise, as they are!"

II

A month later the two were safely installed, with three punchers and a cook, at Sandyridge, when one morning an Indian came to the door, and asked them if they were prepared to buy a pair of caribou tongues. Now, there were not many caribou (wild American reindeer) in the range at that time, and caribou tongue is regarded as a great delicacy.

Both the young men recognized the Indian as one of the hunters belonging to a tribe at present encamped at their fishing grounds down in the valley. He was a finely-built fellow, though disreputably clothed, and not specially clean as to person. "How much do you want for them?" queried Teddy, at which the man named an absurdly impossible price.

"Well, we shan't give you that for them, nor half of it," Teddy replied. "We'll just take them along to the cook, and see what he says."

The cook looked at the tongues, then peered out of the window at the waiting Indian. "Don't you buy anything from that swipe," he advised. "He's the most shiftless idler along the range, and drinks like a fish. They call him Kee Hassa, and his own tribe would turn him out but that they're scared stiff of him. As for the tongues, they ain't caribou tongues at all, but calf tongues. He's trying to sell you tongues out of your own steers."

The two young men looked at each other and laughed. "That's right," said Hanman. "Two calves were killed yesterday by a landslide up at Blue Ridge."

"Well," said the cook, "you send Kee Hassa about his business, pretty quick, and tell him that if he comes monkeying around here again he'll get something he ain't looking for."

Teddy marched out with the tongues, determined once and for all to show that Indian what he was up against. As he opened the door the man's squint riled him, and it is to be feared that Teddy rather forgot himself. Not a word did he speak, but taking up one of the wet and flabby slabs of meat he clubbed it, and dealt the

Indian a resounding smack across the mouth with the heavy end. The man turned on his heel, entirely overcome by surprise and anger, and as he reached the gate he received the second tongue in the nape of the neck—thrown with some force.

"There," said Teddy, "that will teach him." And the two settled down to their breakfast.

III

When the cook described Kee Hassa as a shiftless idler, he described him well, and like so many idlers, Kee Hassa was a bully in his private life. He had no wife, or rather his last wife had run away from him and sought the protection of her grandmother. Kee Hassa did not want her, and so he let her remain, but as a point of honour he made a practice of kicking her or her grandmother over the stewpots whenever he met them. He shared a teepee with his nearest relative, the boy Kee-ha-wa-ha-lee, or rather Hala, as we come to know him later, shared Kee Hassa's teepee.

When Kee Hassa was at home the boy slept under the stars or with the dogs or among the horses—anywhere, so long as he was safely out of reach of the bullying brave. He knew that Kee Hassa meant some day to kill him; that was, unless the day intervened when Hala himself grew strong enough and big enough to put the fear of death into the man who made his life an unholy terror. Yes, assuredly, the day would come when Kee Hassa would have to pay for his sins, but to-day he bossed the roost.

The chief of the tribe was old, and lacked the whole-hearted support of his braves, because most of them were afraid of Hassa. So Hassa cheeked the chief, violated the laws of the tribe, and in short, was a thorn in the flesh of everyone who was so unfortunate as to have anything to do with him.

But the first day of reckoning came sooner than anyone expected. One evening Hanman Berwick and Teddy Field were riding across the range, when they happened suddenly to top a ridge looking straight over the Indian camp.

As they admired the view, the vividly coloured teepees nestling in the pale sunlight, with a background of scarlet sky cut up like a jig-saw against the mountains, they heard savage cries of anger, then they saw a small boy run from a teepee. It was Hala, flying from the wrath of Kee Hassa.

The boy, nimble though he was, had no time to escape, but just then a squaw happened to be passing, and Hala ran to her for protection. He hid his face in her clothing, and she drew her garments about him, holding up one remonstrating hand to Kee Hassa, who at that moment dashed out of the teepee, a vessel of some kind in his hand.

Then the two young white men beheld a brutal and dreadful thing, which they would never have credited. The pot in Kee Hassa's hand was full of scalding syrup of some kind, and now, heedless of the woman's pleading, the brute hurled it at the head of the boy. It spread over his scalp and his neck, scalding also the woman's hands. Both of them screamed with pain, backing away. Their cries were awful, and figures appeared at every tent, yet stood motionless, looking on, such was the fear of Kee Hassa.

The young woman, forgetting her pain, mindful only of the savage injustice of it, drew a dagger from under her clothing and faced Kee Hassa, her eyes flashing, a wolf-like snarl breaking from her clenched teeth. They heard the other women shriek out to her to look out for her life; but the young squaw was mad with righteous fury. She lunged at Kee Hassa, but with a laugh he caught her upraised hand in his. Then his other hand clutched her throat, and marching her backwards he threw her away from

him with a horrible thud, and she lay groaning.

"This," said Teddy, "is where I come in." He leapt from his saddle, leaving the bridle dangling, but taking his whip.

"I guess I'll come along and see the show," remarked Hanman, and, releasing his foot from the stirrup, he hobbled after his friend with that peculiar stiffness of limb which always accompanies the steps of men who spend much time in the saddle.

Teddy Field knew how to use a stock-whip, and he used it that night as he would have scorned to use it on a dumb beast. The whole camp heard the awful "lick" of it, then stroke after stroke in quick and merciless succession. They heard, too, the screams of Kee Hassa as he fled; but Hanman was waiting for him and took up the good work as the murderous Indian escaped from the reach of Teddy's lash. In short, they chased him all round the camp while the braves and squaws laughed. They made him leap the camp fires, and when he escaped one the other was waiting for him. Indeed, they enjoyed themselves as seldom before in their lives.

Finally they tripped Kee Hassa up, and Teddy sat on his chest. "Look here, my lad," he said, shaking the loaded handle of his whip within one inch of Kee Hassa's nose, "if ever you come back to this camp,

Teddy knew how to use a stock-whip

we'll kill you. Do you get me, now? You've got to clear out, and if ever you come back again you'll have me and my outfit to deal with, and we'll do you in, sure as little apples!" Then, still sitting on Kee Hassa's chest, Teddy turned to the old chief who was standing delightedly by. "If again you see the face of Kee Hassa," he said, "let me know, and we'll just about settle his hash. Do you get me?"

The old chief at any rate understood the general gist of it, and nodded approvingly, so, feeling that he had cleared the air, Teddy got up. The Indian also rose, and with murder in his eyes he glanced once at his assailants. Then he turned and strode proudly away, while the squaws laughed and pointed the finger of scorn at him, and even the little children threw things after him. But Kee Hassa never once looked back, nor once did his upright and rigid pride waver as he walked away.

IV

They took Hala back with them in order that the scalds on his neck and scalp might be properly treated, one wisely chosen member of their outfit being Doc—an old man, but a good horseman. Rumour had it that Doc had once possessed rooms in Harley Street, and was world famous as a specialist of some kind, but, be that as it may, here was Doc, with his gentlemanly accent, at the back of beyond, hiding in mortal terror of himself from his lifelong enemy—brandy. And Doc had spent many years in the West.

"Well," said Doc, as he dressed Hala's wounds, "I reckon you've made a good friend of this little fellow, but, from my knowledge of the Indians, you've made a pretty bad enemy of Kee Hassa. Without wishing to interfere, Mr. Teddy, I think you would be far wiser to leave people of this type to their own affairs."

"That so?" said Teddy coldly. "Anyway, you go ahead, Doc, and get the boy patched up. As for the other chap, rest assured Hanman and I are quite capable of looking after him."

But this chanced to be the confidence of youth against the wisdom of many summers.

Things went on quietly and prosperously enough at Sandyridge after that day. Often the Indians brought them presents, or lent ready and useful help with straying cattle. The boy Hala healed up in surprisingly short time. But the heart of the boy was sound, and anxious to pay his way at the camp he took it upon himself, as his special task, to wait upon Teddy and Hanman. He was ever ready to help them in any way he could. He learnt to clean their gear and their brass buckles—even the cartridges in their belts shone like mirrors. He repaired their boots and their clothing; in fact, loving the work and anxious only to repay, he became a priceless possession.

But, like every good Indian, Hala feared to outstay his welcome, and one morning he came with his few belongings to the two young white men, and held out his hand after the white man's custom.

"Kee-ha-wa-ha-lee go," he muttered thickly, tears in his eyes, and, when they stared at him blankly, he went on: "See, summer is far spent, and ere long the wild geese will be journeying south. Kee-ha-wa-ha-lee must join his grandmother ere the berry harvest ripens, or there will be no food for him with the dawning of the winter."

Again Teddy said nothing, but he caught the boy by the scruff of the neck, and marched him gently back into the cook-house. "Give this boy something to do," he said, "and if ever again he speaks of quitting this camp I'll—well, I'll—— What is there for breakfast, cook?"

So Hala, with a grin wider than he had

ever before worn in his life, settled down to peeling the potatoes, thankful above all things that he had not to leave this home of comfort and shelter, nor the great white gods he had come to love.

V

For a time Kee Hassa, sullen and angry, with the laughter of the squaws and the mockery of the children ringing in his ears, merely drifted. He became one of a vast tribe of Ishmael Indians who have *no* tribe. He drifted from one Indian camp to another, but his story had fled before him, and at each he was met with cold and sullen silence. They fed him, he went his way.

So he drifted to the city of the whites, where he drank heavily, tried to knife a member of the vigilance committee, and was sent to prison. Moreover, the police warned him that he was a marked man, and that if ever again he sinned, no mercy would be shown him. So Kee Hassa drifted back to the land of his people. His day of reckoning had come. Often cold and hungry, he hunted for a living, but, when in the distance he saw two young white men riding together, his eyes would brighten, and sliding from his saddle he would creep from cover to cover, watching them like a lynx. For Kee Kassa had drunk deeply of the cup of hatred, and now he watched and waited for but one thing, his vengeance upon those who had brought about his downfall.

One night a young squaw, whose hands bore the scars of a deadly scald, called at Sandyridge Ranch, and asked for the boy Hala, and when Hala went out they conversed earnestly for a little while.

Presently the boy returned, his eyes bright, his teeth set.

" What did the squaw say to you?" asked Hanman quietly.

" She said," the boy answered, " that Kee Hassa is back in the valley, and that he is ever watching—hoping some day to slay one of us."

Teddy Field threw back his head and laughed. " Are you afraid, Hala?" he asked with sudden gravity.

The boy's eyes blazed. " No," said he. " Only very angry." And he went his way like a prince.

VI

Once or twice Mr. Field visited the boys, and every time he slapped them on the shoulders and expressed his joy at the success of their enterprise. " I suppose you will feel entitled to a good fortnight's hunting this fall," said he, at which they looked at one another and shook their heads.

" No, not this fall," they answered. " We'd rather stick to the ranch till everything is settled. Next fall perhaps."

And so he left them, happy in the thought that they were making good.

It had been a dry summer, and it turned out an exceptionally dry autumn. The ranges surrounding Sandyridge were in patches timbered, with areas of coarse dry grass, dotted with Jack pine, lying between. It was a bad country for forest fires, and ere very long it became evident that the fire fiend was raging away to the north and west, and that it required only a wind to bring the fires in their direction.

Thus Hanman, Teddy, and their men had a busy two days of it, transferring their stock to the lower valley, where timber was less plentiful and water more abundant, and by the time this precaution had been taken the air was thick with smoke, through which the sun cast but a sickly light.

" Well, I reckon we've done all we can do in this line," observed Teddy to Hanman. " We'd best hike along back now and see about saving the property."

That was early in the morning of the third day of smoke, and at about eight o'clock the two young men with five of the hands arrived at the ranch, leaving the rest of the boys to do what little could be done in the way of preventing the great herds of cattle from stampeding.

"We'll just leave our ponies in the corral, to be handy," Hanman advised. "We may want them quickly."

The corral consisted of a small enclosure surrounded by a sturdy six-foot fence, having a massive gate held by a bar. They rode into it, slipped from their saddles, and Hanman himself closed and fixed the gate.

The signs were ominous. It had come on to blow from the north-west, and the wind was becoming stronger and stronger. Also, the smoke was becoming thicker, and they knew well enough what was taking place. The fires were moving, and uniting forces they were responsible for the gale, as though nature were gathering her strength to scourge the country by fire.

"Strikes me we're in for a veritable son of a gun of a blaze up," remarked the cook. "No good taking chances, Mr. Hanman. We'd best get out for all we're worth soon as we hear the fire."

"I don't hear anything yet," replied Hanman, turning his "deaf" ear towards the roar of the gale.

"We'll hear her all right," said the cook, "and I for one ain't taking no chances."

Under Teddy's directions the men worked like terriers. They cut down the timber on the north-west side of the property, and burnt the grass up-wind to make a clearing. By this time it was so dark that they collided with one another, their eyes began to smart, their throats burned, and there was a danger of losing their bearings.

"Do you hear that, Hanman?" It was Teddy's voice shouting in his ear.

Hanman listened, and a dull rumbling roar fell upon his ears. It was like underground thunder, terrifying in its strength.

"Yes," Hanman answered. "That the fire?"

Teddy nodded. "Some fire, my lad!" said he. "Probably she's still eight or nine miles away. Pretty bad luck, eh?"

"Sounds bad enough," Hanman agreed. "But I reckon we've done what we can to save the property."

"Yes, but we can't save it. Nothing on earth could save it from such a fire. It will take us all our time to save ourselves."

Teddy Field put his fingers in his mouth and whistled, whereupon the men came staggering up from all quarters, most of them with handkerchiefs tied over their faces.

"Now to the bungalow," said Teddy. "The pit's all ready to dump everything into it. Come on, boys."

They raided the house like a gang of thieves, and sweating and coughing, hurled everything of value into the pit—a huge hole, previously prepared near the veranda. Finally a sheet was thrown over the belongings and earth shovelled on top to keep off the flames.

While this was going on no one saw the dark figure ride through the clouds of smoke up to the corral gate. It was Kee Hassa.

Without dismounting the Indian withdrew the bar, and in an instant the terrified animals within broke from their prison, and galloped away down-wind with a thunder of hoofs, the Indian galloping after them.

One of the animals, however, stopped as though it had remembered something, and swinging out of the herd dashed back, unseen by Kee Hassa. Thus the men were just covering the pit when suddenly Hanman's pony appeared, trotting up to them, and clearly looking for her master.

"Halloa!" cried Hanman. "What does this mean?" Followed by the pony, he went over to the corral. It was empty!

The terrified animals galloped away down-wind

"The horses are broken out and gone," he told the others. "Which of you boys is married?"

Someone said that the cook was married, and had several children.

"Here you are, cook," called Hanman. "Take this pony, and good luck to you."

The cook obeyed in silent gratitude, and they saw him ride off, leaving them to face the inferno.

"Now, boys," said Teddy. "We've just got to keep our heads and stick it through. Anyone been through a bad forest fire before? We want a leader."

Only the boy Hala stepped forward. He had been through several fires, he said, and knew how to act. "What do you say, boys?" Teddy asked. "Should we appoint him leader?"

"Yes," they answered.

Hala gave his orders, and Teddy passed them on. They dug an earth trench, its parapet towards the fire, clearing away anything that could burn, for yards around. They got blankets from the house and saturated them, carrying the hose into the trench to play on each other and so slake their smouldering clothing. Some of the men wanted to bolt for the river, but Hala said it would be madness.

By now the roar of the fire seemed to be on every side of them; the very earth was shaking, and the air seemed to quiver with that visible motion one sees sometimes in a nightmare. Burning twigs and wisps of

bark, fleeing on the wings of the hurricane, settled on their clothing and burnt through to their skin, while all realized that the chief danger lay in being suffocated by the fumes.

Then, with a roar, the main fire bore down upon them, and the living nightmare began. Looking back on it none of them could recall clearly what had happened. In the twinkling of an eye there was a white-hot wall of fire on every side, while the heat sent them cowering and shuddering, their faces to the earth. They saw the long tongues of fire lick hungrily across the open space ahead, to strike the parapet and curl upwards, spinning and writhing. Teddy had the hose, playing its welcome blast upon his men, forgetful of himself, till the awful heat told him that his very clothing was alight. Squirrels and prairie hares bounded out from among the flames, and huddled among them, while once an old black bear ambled past, her fur singeing, looked at them a moment, but evidently deciding that their retreat was too insecure, blundered on.

" Heavens!" gasped Teddy in Hanman's ear. " The boys won't stick this much longer."

As he spoke one of them went mad or something. He leapt up with an awful yell, and staggering, falling, staggering, set off across the fire-scourged clearing.

In an instant Hanman was after him, overtaking him and leaping on his shoulders. They fell to the ground together, and there, in the quivering heat, they fought for a moment like madmen; then Hanman came back, dragging the other with him. As he regained the trench he drew his revolver. " If any man breaks cover I'll shoot him dead," he rasped out chokingly.

The others understood. It was the only way to prevent a stampede, which would be fatal.

" One can't live out there," Hanman coughed out to his chum. " Our only chance lies where we are. Can we stick it out, Hala?"

The boy nodded. " Worst over now," he said. " All live if we stay here. All died if we move."

It was true, yet to each of them it seemed that nothing could be worse than what they were now enduring. They could see nothing, but they knew that the bungalow away on their right was burning savagely, and responsible for a good deal of heat; but they thanked their lucky stars that the water supply held out.

It must have been at about this time that one of the boys, in charge of the cattle, saw an Indian riding wildly through the middle of them, trying to break up the herds and stampede them into the fire-belt. The cowboy watched amazed, then he drew his carbine, took steady aim at the fleeing horseman, and fired. The Indian swung in his saddle, drew rein, and looked about for his assailant, but the smoke clouds fell between them, and when it cleared the Indian was gone. So much for Kee Hassa.

Three hours later the fire finally burnt itself out, and the little group of men dragged themselves from the trench. Their clothing was all in holes, and dropping to bits. Red eyes peered painfully from blackened faces. None of them could speak above a whisper, yet, now that they were " out of the wood ", it was not long ere they were chaffing and joking. They got the medicine-chest from the pit, and proceeded forthwith to anoint themselves with oil.

" I'm one gigantic blister," murmured Teddy. " There isn't a square inch of me still uncooked."

" What about the kid?" queried someone. " I reckon we owe him something for his idea, don't we? If we'd tried to get out instead of making the trench, there wouldn't be a manjack of us alive now."

They had not the voices to cheer the kid,

but they shook hands with him and clapped him on the shoulders, at which Hala stared blankly from one to the other, wondering what kind of new game it was.

Later, one of the boys—it was Doc—rode up from the lower valley, and announced that he did not think they had lost a single steer.

"Good," said Teddy. "We haven't come off so badly, then. No men lost, not even any cattle. All we have lost is the bungalow, and we can build another in a week. But I would like to know who opened the corral gate."

"Probably the man I winged for trying to stampede the cattle," said the puncher from the lower valley. "I reckon, though I'm not quite sure, that it was your old friend Kee Hassa, Master Teddy."

Just then the man who had "gone mad" and tried to break cover, stumbled up, a mass of bandages, and offered his hand to Hanman, with thanks for saving his life. It took Hanman some time to find out what the unrecognizable individual was driving at, then he said: "Oh, go to blazes!"

"Thanks, sir," said the man. "I've already been there once to-day."

On the day following, an exhausted and blistered mustang, on whose back sat a fire-blind and almost naked Indian, shot through the shoulder, was attracted to the site of the ranch by the neighing of the horses. Thither it stumbled, feebly answering the call, while the blind Indian rigidly sat his saddle, prepared for whatsoever the fates might mete out to him.

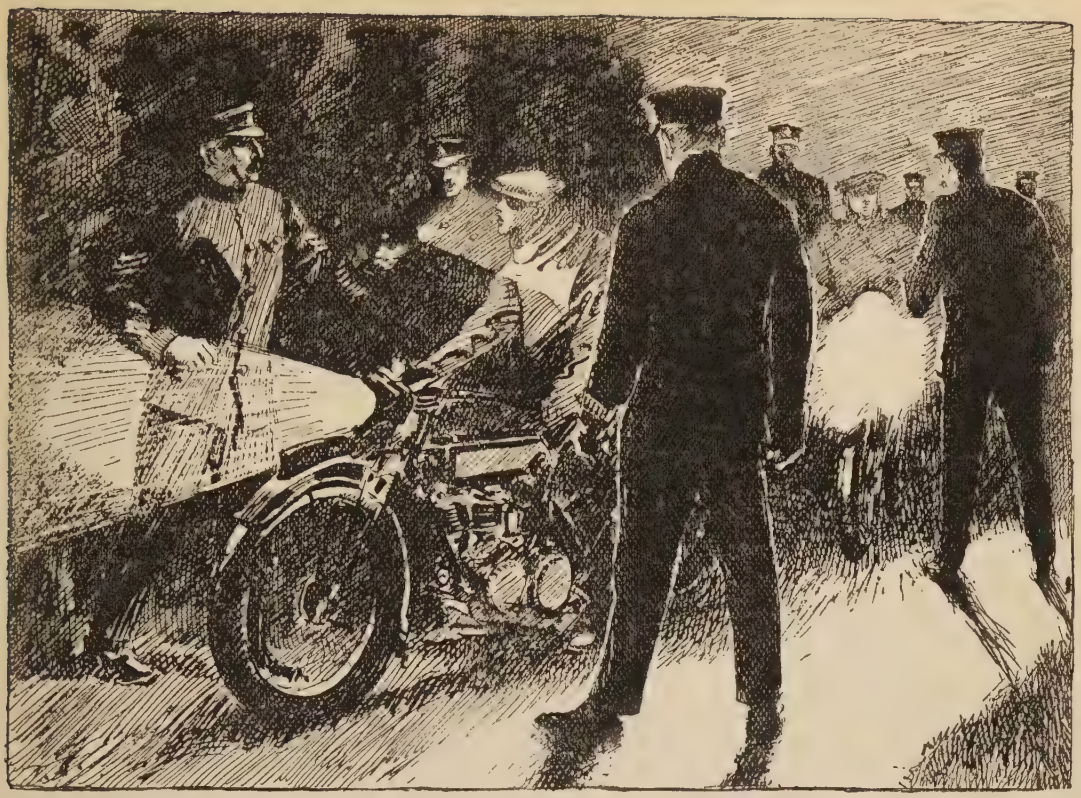
. . . . . .

"Yes," said Teddy to his range boss that night. "Kee Hassa has made a clean breast of everything. He's humbled himself to the dust. Of course, we could relieve ourselves of responsibility by handing him over to the police for a few months in jug, but all the fight has gone out of him, and he no longer hates us. Also—he's blinded, and wounded."

There was a pause, then Hanman, his hands behind him, momentarily turned his back on his friend. "Personally I prefer the white man's course," he said. "To take him in and nurse him. Once we won his hatred. Now is our chance to win his everlasting fidelity and gratitude. Men who can hate can also—love and serve. We've learnt something to-day, Teddy. We've seen the beasts face death together, forgetting to harm one another. We've seen the Great Truce, when all quarrels are forgotten, all old wrongs forgiven. Surely it is something in life to have seen that, and since we ourselves are alive, I don't feel like knocking out a fellow man who, also, has lived through Hell!"

So to-day at the prosperous ranch of Sandyridge, you may see an old Indian, whose duty seems to consist of carrying water for the horses, tottering his short-sighted way about his simple duties. He wears gold-rimmed glasses, and on Sundays he wears an old top hat, which is minus a brim, but of which he is very proud. So the boys call him Top Hat Kee.

There is one other Indian at the ranch—Hala, whose duty it is to supervise the miles and miles of wire fence which lie between the good lands and the bad. The two are entirely happy and perfectly good friends, save that on Sundays Hala can never resist the temptation of slinging one potato at Kee's top hat. So far he has never hit it. One is doubtful whether he really tries. But if ever he does hit it—then, I fancy, there will be words!



"Got you!" said a sergeant curtly

A Crowded Night

By George Blake

A young moon was trembling above the Galloway hills when the machines purred over the hump-backed bridge that unites England with the ancient kingdom of Scotland near historic Gretna Green.

Tom Kingslake and Peter Hackett—"Pat" for short—were late on the road, not through accident, but of design. When you have only a fortnight in which to accomplish a motor-cycling tour in the West Highlands, you naturally cover the distance between your native Midlands and your Scottish base in as short a time as possible. Mounted on their sturdy "Glorias", Tom and Pat had come from Chester that autumn day. Noon saw them lunching at Garstang—for progress through industrial Lancashire had been slow. Then on the summit of Shap Fell three punctures in rapid succession held them up, so that the temperamental Pat despaired of seeing Scotland within the week. It was there and then that Tom made his bold but perfectly rational suggestion: that they should dine

well in Carlisle and push on to Glasgow through what promised to be a lovely night. Pat smiled again.

" It's an idea, by Jove!" he said.

So here they were on the Scottish roads at last, pressing on towards the North. The night was fine, starry-clear and warm. Their Glorias were by no means of the latest model; but any Gloria, of whatever age, has a capacity for honest work that the years cannot impair, and the two friends plugged on towards Dumfries, secure in the faith that they would get there, and further, to Glasgow, before the sun should be over the hills next morning. It was easy riding. The road was smooth and hard, so white in the night that their lamps were lit only in deference to the laws of the land. Pat sang as he buzzed along at a steady twenty behind the more business-like Tom.

They passed through Annan five minutes before nine o'clock. Lamps were lit in the little white houses, and only a few stragglers were about in the streets. There was nothing to keep them here. On they went merrily. They were through the town in a couple of minutes, and on to the road that leads to Dumfries. Now this road, beyond all question, is one of the finest in the country. Broad, smooth, and straight, it extends to the young and active the heartiest sort of invitation to contravene the road-laws of the land. Tom and Pat were not slow to accept it. Two thumbs simultaneously pushed over two throttle-levers; the Glorias responded nobly. Soon the needle on the speedometer of Pat's machine was trembling about the 38 mark. Had their machines been five years younger, their speed had been increased by an equal number of miles per hour. The old Glorias were all out.

It was magnificently exhilarating. The miles of road were positively gulped; the milestones seemed to flash past in quick succession. At this exciting rate Glasgow would be reached long before the dawn. Then for the blue lochs and high hills of the West Country! So thought Pat in the uplift of speed. It hurt him, almost, to hear the singing note of Tom's open exhaust fail to a steady puff, to hear the gritting of his brakes, and see a warning hand held up. He rode abreast of his friend.

" What's up?" he asked.

Then he saw for himself. A cordon of men was stretched across the road two hundred yards ahead. In the clear night he could make out the uniforms of policemen, and catch the flash of polished buttons.

" Didn't think they'd take so much trouble to nip you for scorching," he remarked.

" Shut up," commanded Tom.

They slowed down and stopped just short of the cordon. In a trice, a ring of burly policemen formed round them. An electric torch was flashed in their faces.

" Got you," said a sergeant curtly, switching off his lamp.

" Got what?" asked Tom brightly.

" None of that, now," advised the sergeant. " You look innocent enough, but you'd better keep your mouth shut."

" But look here——" Pat protested.

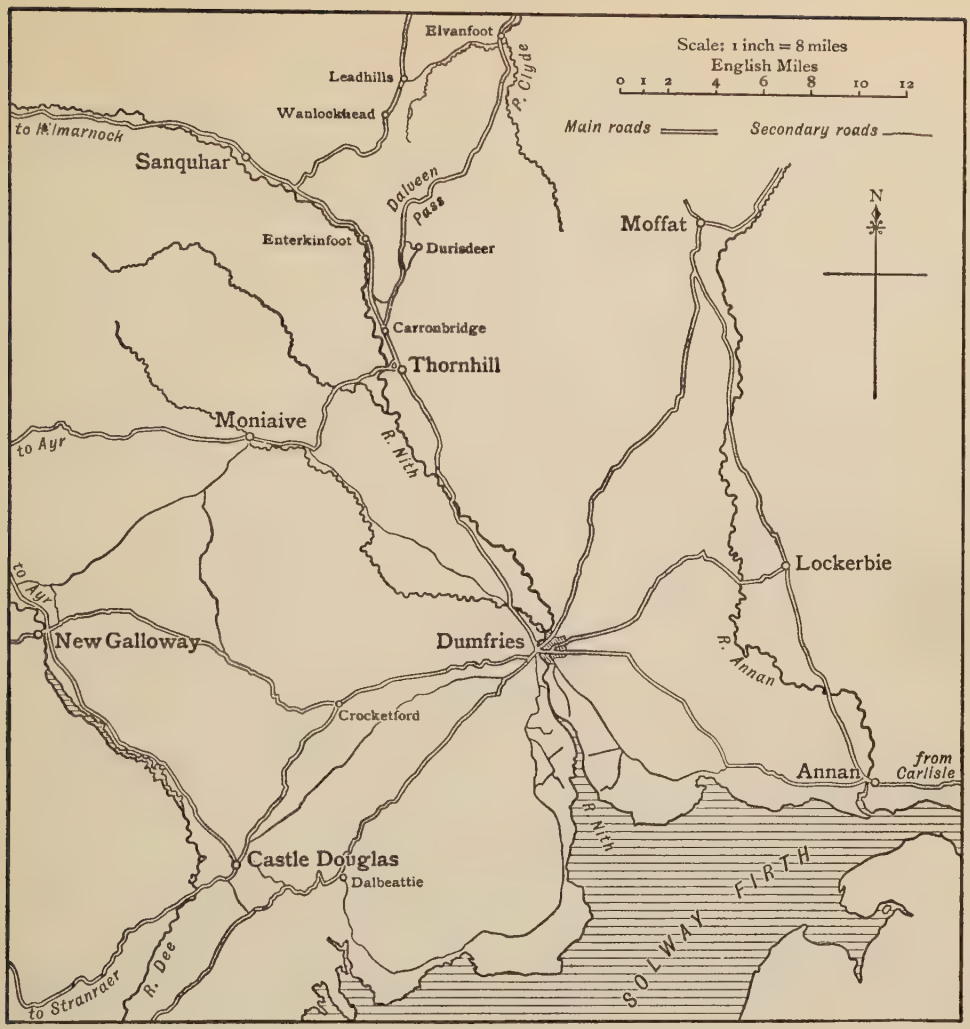
" None of that, now!" The sergeant turned to one of his men: " Start up your engine, Pirrie."

Tom and Pat stared at each other. The whole thing seemed so ludicrous.

" But look here——" began Pat again.

" Shut up!" said the sergeant. " The innocent game doesn't work. Keep what you have to say for the Chief. I'll trouble you——"

They found themselves handcuffed. A Ford car had backed out of a side-road, and into it they were bundled, the sergeant following. On the front seat beside the driver sat a constable with a revolver on his knee.



"Follow up on their machines, Watson, and you, Elliot," the sergeant shouted to two of his men, then to the driver: "On you go."

And so the tour in Scotland was continued under curious auspices. Pat Hackett, now that the first shock was over, had difficulty in choking back a laugh. It was clear enough to his quick brain that a rustic sergeant of police had made a mistake through not troubling to make a careful identification of his prisoners. That was really funny; it tickled Pat's sense of humour; he actually looked forward to the interview with the Chief at Dumfries. He glanced at the face of his friend. Tom was scowling; it was plain he was struggling to express himself. But Pat nudged him and whispered: "Not a word just now." The Ford rattled on. Behind it came their confiscated Glorias. And again Pat chuckled, and thought of what the Chief would say, of what they

would say to the Chief, and what both parties would say to the sergeant. Their adventures in Scotland were beginning well.

They were at the police station in Dumfries within ten minutes. Pat and Tom saw their machines brought in, then found themselves standing before a desk at which was seated an elderly man with keen eyes and whimsical lips. To this dignitary, obviously the Chief, the sergeant was explaining the case when they entered.

"Here they are, sir," he announced proudly.

The Chief looked up quickly. On his face was an expression of severity, which, as he gazed at the two harmless-looking lads before him, gradually gave place to a smile.

"They certainly don't look very fierce, Paterson," he said pleasantly; then to Tom and Pat: "Explain yourselves."

Tom evidently could not trust himself to speak calmly, for he nudged Pat sharply. The latter, answering the official smile, gave a full and simple account of their actions and intentions before the cordon had closed about them so suddenly on the Annan Road.

"Seems convincing, Paterson," said the Chief dryly to the sergeant.

"That sort's always glib enough, sir," retorted Paterson. "But their motor-bikes give them away. They're Glorias right enough."

"We'll see them," said the Chief, rising. He came back shortly from the yard with a crestfallen sergeant. "They're Glorias all right, Paterson. Only they happen to be about five years old; and they have the Chester mark—F.M. I think you'd better take the handcuffs off these boys, Paterson, and get back to your post."

So the handcuffs were removed in silence; in silence Paterson saluted and left the room. Then the Chief turned pleasantly to the tourists.

"And now I'll explain this silly error," he said. "Have a seat. A cigarette—no? Well—there has been a big affair in Carlisle to-day—two in fact. In the first place, two new Glorias were stolen from the Gloria depot there. In the second, a bank messenger was robbed of £5000 in notes. The theory—it is virtually a fact—is that the scoundrels who robbed the messenger also stole the bicycles in order to get away quickly. And Sergeant Paterson, you see, was not altogether foolish in arresting you. He merely failed to look at your number-plates, for he knows quite well that the stolen machines have the Cumberland mark. And you two really don't look like bank thieves."

"Quite, sir," grinned Pat.

"No harm done," growled Tom.

"But your trip has been interrupted," the Chief went on. "Hadn't you better stay the night now? My wife will be delighted."

After thanking him, they protested. It had been nothing. The night was fine. They would go on.

"You might fall in with two dangerous thieves on the way, you know," the Chief warned them.

"Then we might be able to help you, sir," said Pat brightly.

"Very well, boys. Wait—I'll give you a chit that will pass you through any cordon you may meet between here and Sanquhar, if that's the way you say you are going."

He wrote a note on official paper and handed it to Tom. "There you are. Take care of yourselves. Good night! Good luck!"

And so at last the tour was resumed. It was now half-past ten, but given decent luck, they could still be in Glasgow by three next morning—time enough to allow a rest before the serious business of next day. Though the moon was now behind the hills, the starlight was sufficient on a road

The Pursuit

so broad and smooth as that which rises to Sanquhar and Kirkconnel through the valley of the Nith. True, it was darkened here and there by overhanging trees, and wound tortuously round the flanks of little wooded hills. But the exhilaration of the night was upon them. Their lamps cast a strange, unearthly but heartening sheen on the trees. The clear air of the uplands and the reaction from their encounter raised their spirits and deepened their apprehension of the rareness of the hour. It was good to hear the whisper of the river over its rounded stones; good to hear the call of night-birds from the high hills; good to feel the steady, tireless pull of the Glorias up the brae. Pat resumed his song. Life was worth living, indeed. The countless stars seemed to be winking cheerily on their adventure.

It was half-past eleven before they passed through the sleeping village of Thornhill. A police picket had stopped them a mile on the Dumfries side of the last straggling cottage, but the note from the Chief at Dumfries had the right effect on a not too intelligent sergeant.

"Ye'll can gang on," he said grudgingly. "But they'll stop ye again this side o' Sanquhar. There's a picket watching the road that gangs ower the hills to Wanlockhead and Crawford. Ca' canny—that's ma advice to ye."

But they did not accept the sergeant's counsel. They thundered through Thornhill, raising echoes and the dogs, and, once on the open road again, for them it was a race up the valley. From Enterkinfoot they would have to proceed warily, but now there were six miles of empty road to cover. The old Glorias were whipped up to their limit. Pat drew slightly ahead; it was his private ambition to show Tom that of their two old crocks, his was the better, and here was the chance. He rode along happily, calculating the hour of their arrival in Glasgow, barring accidents. Then an accident happened. There was a loud report behind. Instinctively Pat closed his throttle, and jammed on the brakes. He knew at once what was wrong. Tom was already bending over the back wheel of his machine.

"It's a regular cut," grunted Tom. "Just my luck!"

He opened the tool-case behind the saddle and got out the repair outfit. Pat was running his fingers over the cover.

"Where's your cut?" he asked, knowing his friend's inveterate pessimism. "There's no sign of it here. It would just be a nail and would go with a bang because you were travelling so fast. Let's get the wheel off and see."

Working in the light of two acetylene lamps, they soon had the wheel on the ground. Two pairs of hands made light work of removing the outer cover. Pat inflated the inner tube again, and listened. There was just the suspicion of a hiss, but the tube did not collapse rapidly.

"We'll need water," said Tom. He looked about him. "The river's no use, but we're just at the village of Carronbridge, and there must be a cottage near."

"I'll go and see, if you stay here," volunteered Pat; then: "I'd better take the tube with me—to save time. You look after the machines."

It was as Tom had guessed. Round the first turn of the road Pat saw the dim white gable of a cottage. It stood back from the highway, sheltered beneath three great plane trees, a vegetable garden before it. A step or two farther on, Pat was pleased to see that through the cotton blind on one of the little windows shone the soft light of a paraffin lamp. He opened the little gate in the hedge, walked up the short path, and knocked confidently on the dark door.

He could hear the shuffling signs of human movement within, but was not sur-

prised when they stopped at his knock. The inmates would be getting to bed, he thought, and would naturally be put about by this invasion. He waited, whistling softly; but there was dead silence within. Still hopeful, he knocked again. This time he caught a rustle of cloth—at his elbow, it seemed—and then recovered from the shock to realize that the cotton blind in the window had been pulled aside. The light had been extinguished. The cottage might have been uninhabited but for his knowledge to the contrary. He dared to knock again. And at that there came the shuffling of feet within; the sound of heavy breathing; a hand laid on the bar of the door. The bar was drawn back; the door opened about four inches. Pat could make out no human face in the gloom.

"What is't?"

The hoarse voice of a man rapped out the question. Pat hesitated.

"Water," he began vaguely; then pulled himself together. "This tyre is punctured. I wondered if you could let me have a basin of water."

"There's a trough on the road-side down there," snapped the voice.

The door closed, and Pat was left pondering the truth about the reputed hospitality of the Scots. He could understand a sleepy householder's objection to being disturbed; but that light had been extinguished so suddenly; there had been so much grudging suspicion and boorish opposition in the man's tone. He stared at the blank door, and then he became aware of another cause for suspicion. The slight opening of the door had let escape more than the domestic smells of a cottage interior. Pat sniffed—"Petrol!" his brain answered. There was no mistaking it. The smell of petrol in a but-and-ben, and a nervous householder! As he made his way back to the road, Pat decided that the incident was distinctly fishy. But Tom would be waiting anxiously.

He found the trough set into the hedge about fifty yards beyond the gate of the cottage. And again, his nostrils suddenly assailed by a familiar smell, he stopped to think. That smell — heavy, sickening, faintly reminiscent of a disinfectant? He had it—calcium carbide! Somebody had been recharging acetylene lamps at the well. Pat stooped to examine the ground. Yes—here was a little heap of wet, exhausted carbide; there a thin powdering of fresh stuff. Careful not to obliterate previous marks, he went over the area about the trough and within a minute came upon what he sought. In the soft ground, tramped by the hooves of thirsty horses, were the distinct impressions of motor-cycle tyres. In one place they were heavy—where the machines had been propped against the bank. And the impressions were those of Carton Cords, the tyre with which the later models of the Gloria are universally known to be furnished.

Trembling with excitement, Pat could hardly handle the punctured tube under water. It was so urgent that he should get back to Tom; so urgent that they should hurry on to overtake, if possible, those other two who—Pat had now not the slightest doubt—had helped themselves to two new Glorias and the contents of a bank-messenger's bag in Carlisle that afternoon. It seemed an age before he found the tiny hole and had it accurately marked. At top speed he ran back along the road to where Tom sat glumly beside his disabled machine.

"You've been a Dickens of a time," said he.

But Pat was beyond polite conversation. He rattled out his story, that perfect circumstantial chain: the carbide—the marks of the tyres—Gloria tyres undoubtedly. Only as an afterthought did he add the

detail regarding the smell of petrol in the cottage.

" Where does the cottage come in?" asked Tom cynically.

" That's where the money's hidden, fat-head!" retorted Pat.

It was not Tom's way to betray excitement in speech, but he had the tube patched, the cover on, and the wheel replaced in record time. At last he stood up.

" Your theory sounds all right, old man," he said slowly. " But why didn't the police patrol down the road nab 'em?"

Pat danced in wild impatience. He drew a map from his pocket and thrust it into the beam from his lamp.

" Look here!" he cried. " These rotters didn't come along the Dumfries Road at all. They hardly touched Dumfries, silly. They dodged off at Annan by these little side-roads along the coast, broke off to Castle Douglas or Crocketford, then up to New Galloway or somewhere about there, then across here by Moniaive. There are dozens of ways of getting round. Don't you see the road comes into Thornhill on this side of the spot where that fat-headed sergeant has placed his patrol? These fellows are bound to have taken a roundabout road, just to dodge the patrols. Not that that's very difficult."

Tom would never admit excitement. But already he was astride his machine, his foot on the kick-starter.

" Those peelers at Sanquhar will likely get 'em before we arrive," he said. " But come along."

The roar of the engines affronted the peace of the night.

" For all you're worth," commanded Tom.

In slipped the clutches, and off tore the machines through the sleeping village of Carronbridge. Their haste was desperate now. If the Glorias has done nobly on the level Annan Road, they excelled themselves now by tearing up that rising, winding highway by the Nith at nearly forty miles an hour. Never had the driving of these two friends been so severely tested. Cornering at such a speed demanded more than nerve; it called for utter, reckless abandonment to the rigour of the chase. Their racing wheels scattered the granite chips of the road surface in showers against the hedges. Stones were picked up to rattle noisily on the under-shields of their engines. They forced oil into the hot bearings until blue jets of vapour streaked from their exhausts behind them. This, thought Pat, this is the life!

But still his mind worked clearly. He began to see the oddity of this hectic race by two peaceful tourists along the quiet Scottish roads; and it was inevitable, with such a temperament as his, that he should begin to question the accuracy of the reasoning, his own, that had sent them on this fierce chase. Why should they have concluded that the thieves had come this way? They had all England before them; and if the rogue's instinct had driven them to the hills, there were yet scores of other roads they might have taken. Glorias are not so scarce that the fresh imprint of new Carton Cords by a roadside well is specially remarkable. There must be several parties of motor-cycling tourists on their way to the North. So reflected Pat coolly as he kept his machine thundering along at top speed. But it was jolly good fun. He stuck to that —it was jolly good fun; and this pace would bring them all the sooner to Glasgow.

Shortly they were rattling past the straggling cottages of Enterkinfoot. Here the valley was barer. The thick woods of the lower reaches had given place to thin scrub of oak and hazel on the lower slopes of gaunt, black hills. They could feel on their faces the fresh tang of moorland airs. Tom lowered his speed to let his companion come abreast of him.

"Get ready to slow down for the patrol near Sanquhar," he shouted.

It was good advice. Within five minutes they raced round a corner almost on top of a group of policemen. Encouraged by shouts from the uniformed men, they pulled up just in time. Tom had their passport ready immediately for examination by a smart young sergeant.

"All right," said the sergeant curtly, having carefully inspected the document by the light of an electric torch. "You can go on."

"You've seen nothing of them, then?" asked Pat despondently.

"It's been as quiet as a Sunday night in Kirkconnel," answered the sergeant, with a smile.

Pat's heart sank. He felt a complete fool. It had been two young farmers who had recharged their lamps at Carronbridge. What must Tom be thinking of him? But that grave young man was filling the sergeant's ears with their discoveries and suspicions. The policeman was plainly excited by the news.

"Carronbridge!" he cried at last, when Tom had told his tale. "The cottage beyond the village! That's where old Galbraith lives—a bad old rascal—with two rascally nephews. By Jove! gentlemen, I do believe you've struck it!"

"But where can they be?" asked Pat, without hope.

"That's easy, sir," said the sergeant swiftly. He pulled a map from his pocket: "See here—your guess about their coming into Thornhill in a roundabout road from Moniaive is probably right. But look here, —you didn't think of this road that runs up the hill from Carronbridge through Durisdeer to Elvanfoot. It's a wild, rough road, but these fellows won't be particular. That's the way they've gone, take my word for it."

He called to one of his men.

"Crank up the old Ford, Malcolm." Then he turned to Tom and Pat: "I mustn't leave my post, but I'll send a carload of men to Carronbridge to look up old Galbraith and watch the bottom of the Elvanfoot road. It's probable these two won't go right over the hill; they're more likely to hide up there for a bit till the coast is clear. In any case, I'll phone to warn our people at Crawford now. If you two gentlemen care to help——"

"Rather!" cried Tom and Pat simultaneously. And Tom went on: "We could have a run up the Elvanfoot road from Carronbridge and do a little scouting."

"First rate, gentlemen!" said the sergeant. He saw that the Ford was manned and ready to start. "Off you go, then! And the best of luck!"

Many a hard thing has been said about the notorious product of the Ford factories, but Tom and Pat did not find that night that the specimen of the type they had to follow back to Carronbridge could be criticized on the score of speed. It led them a pretty dance over those eight miles of gradual descent. They were forced to admit to themselves that if desperate criminals on modern machines had to be chased and overtaken, the four-wheeler seemed more likely to succeed than their own antiquated mounts. It was just by pushing the Glorias to the last ounce of their capacity that they contrived to keep the tail-light of the police car in view. They were in Carronbridge again within quarter of an hour of leaving the patrol at the foot of the Leadhills road.

A constable with grizzled hair, a stripe on his uniform sleeve, was in charge of the party. An elderly man, his mind was clear as to how they should proceed.

"Malcolm,"—he addressed the driver of the car—"wait you at the foot of the hill

road with Sillars and the car. These two young gentlemen will take a turn up that way and see if there are any signs of the rascals. I'll take Mackenzie here and pay old Galbraith's bit house a visit."

He then turned to Tom and Pat.

" You'll not find it easy going, that road, gentlemen. It's rough and it's steep, and it's a wild, wild place the Dalveen Pass. A real terror at this time o' night. But these two, if they are hiding up there, will either run before you into trouble at Elvanfoot or back here on the top of Malcolm and Sillars. Good night and good luck, gentlemen. Take it easy."

Their hearts thumping with excitement and pride in this high adventure, Tom and Pat turned their machines up the road that leads over as wild a tangle of hills as there is in the Lowlands of Scotland. They remembered the policeman's advice to go easy; particularly they remembered his somewhat tactless reference to the wildness of the Dalveen Pass; but the road ran at first through such pleasant country, they could not but feel that the dangers and difficulties of their task had been overrated. For five miles, beside the pleasant Carron Water, they made good speed. Then, beyond Durisdeer, the character of the country suddenly changed. The road began to cut upwards through the very bases of the great hills, whose barren sides now towered above them. Now and again, more frequently as they went on, their lower gears were required. A sharp night wind was blowing from the east down the Pass. From the slopes above them came the forlorn, rattling cries of the black-faced sheep.

They kept close together. The eerie silence of the hills, the funereal suggestion of their great slumbering shapes against the clear sky, stressed by contrast the warm values of companionship. They had recharged their lamps at Carronbridge and kept them blazing now. They rode side by side so that they might have the comfort of talking.

Round the shoulder of Pettylung they entered the Pass. It was like a tunnel, so narrow-seeming, and high above them the patch of starry sky. A phrase of an old, familiar poem kept running in Pat's mind as they bumped along the narrow road into its blackness: " Into the jaws of death, into the mouth of Hell——" But there were not six hundred of them, only two. That, in this hour of excitement, seemed an extremely funny thought. A shaky laugh escaped him.

" Fat lot to laugh at!" growled Tom by his side.

And at that characteristic sally Pat could laugh honestly. Old Tom was always so matter-of-fact. Old Tom was the right sort of chap to have on this adventure. Presently he addressed to Pat a characteristic piece of his strong common sense.

" We needn't worry," he said. " We needn't imagine that those two lads, if they are up here, will wait for us. Our lights will scare them on to Elvanfoot. We can only go on there quickly, and if they're not there, at any rate we have done our bit. We'll go straight on to Glasgow."

" Right," said Pat.

It made the strain much easier to bear. There was not going to be any rough encounter with two desperate men—possibly two armed men. And just at that moment, revolving this comfortable thought, Pat's fingers were tightened round the exhaust-valve lifter while his right leg shot forward to jam on the foot brake. Their headlights were shining on the polished metal of two motor-cycles—two new Glorias, unmistakably—lying against the low bank by the side of the road.

With the shutting off of their engines a

weird silence fell on the Dalveen Pass. Only the night wind whistled wearily through the rushes on the hill-sides. Pat and Tom sat motionless astride their machines and listened. It may have been three full minutes before Tom spoke in a whisper.

" They're hiding in that little quarry—there. Even if they were sleeping they must have heard us. Out with your light—quick!"

They screwed the water-taps shut and pinched the tubes. It seemed pitch dark thereafter. Tom spoke again.

" Come on, we've got to roust 'em out of there. Get your heaviest spanner, in case——"

With infinite care they wheeled their machines to the roadside and laid them against the bank near the glittering stolen pair. Tom drew a heavy adjustable spanner from his tool-bag. Pat put his faith in a hammer he carried in his kit.

" Come on," said Tom grimly.

And they crossed the ditch under cover of an orderly pile of road-metal that lay at the mouth of the quarry. It was very dark. To creep into the blackness of the quarry was to enter the dangerous unknown. But they went on sturdily, side by side—and still no sound but the crunch of their feet on the loose stones. Then Pat tripped and fell heavily over the wheel of a derelict barrow. Tom stooped to help him—but the light of an electric torch full in his face brought him bolt upright with a start. He raised the spanner in his hand.

Now a heavy King Dick spanner, held in a certain way in an uncertain light, is uncomfortably like a revolver in appearance. The electric torch clicked out. Tom heard a roar—then the rush of feet towards him. Something pushed heavily on his shoulder, and he found himself tripped backwards over the fallen body of Pat. His assailants were running for dear life from the quarry.

He picked himself up smartly and dragged Pat to his feet.

" After them like blazes!" he yelled.

They ran together to the mouth of the quarry.

" Stop!" they were yelling in chorus.

The chugging of two motor-cycle engines answered them. They slithered down the bank into the ditch and scrambled to the machines. The other two were already racing down the Pass towards Carronbridge again. Then Pat let out a shriek of laughter.

" They've taken our old crocks and left us the new ones!" he cried.

Tom stooped to stare at the fresh enamel on the tanks.

" So they have!" he laughed. " Now we've got 'em! We can give them ten miles in the hour on these. On you get, Pat, and we'll chivvy the beggars into the patrol at the foot of the road."

The engines roared away with a healthy crackle at the first kick.

" Now then," cried Tom, " on with your lights. It's the new electric set."

And off they went, tearing to overtake the old machines, their headlights slicing the darkness. It was a scramble downhill; not so much a test of the new Gloria against the old as one of fearless riding down a dark rough road. They let themselves run wild; and it was only the luck of the reckless that brought them scatheless round those sharp, rutted corners and kept them out of the unmarked ditches. They had almost overtaken the fugitives before Durisdeer was abreast.

" Keep them at that," cried Tom to Pat, easing off the pace. " Let them break their necks if they like. We can always pull them in."

The men in front were driving the old machines all out, but Pat and Tom had still a reserve of power and speed in hand.

The hunted men turned sharp away from the menacing glare

They could afford to hammer along a hundred yards behind and keep that position with ease. Pat spent the time speculating pleasantly on the nature of the scrimmage between the thieves and the policemen at the foot of the road. He had not dared to think that the capture would be so swift. Here they were at Carronbridge Station, two miles from the village. Five minutes more and——' His reverie was interrupted by a shout from Tom. He peered ahead. There was no sign of the fugitives there, but the thudding of their engines could still be heard slightly to the right.

"A side road!" yelled Tom. "After them like fury!"

The Glorias leaped under them to the opened throttles. They took the corner at a reckless angle. It was obviously a short cut to the main road: it could be no more than a mile ahead. They pounded along, driving all they knew. Nearer and nearer came the roar of those fugitive machines. Now they were on their heels. Then the ear-splitting thunder of four exhausts in chorus, and in a flash they went past.

"On—on!" shrieked Tom.

Within a minute they had turned into the main road. The machines shivered to a standstill.

"Stand here with your lights shining down the road towards the village," cried Tom.

Hardly were they in position—a human

barrier across the road to the North—than the other two machines came upon them. They could hear the check administered by throttle and brake, and see the waver of hesitation as the runaways faced their own steady lights. It was a crisis of a moment. The hunted men turned sharp away from that menacing glare and took the turn to the left for Carronbridge.

" That's that," said Tom calmly. " We'll go back quickly and see the fun."

. . . . . .

They found the elderly constable in high glee.

" Fine, gentlemen, fine!" he cried, as they rode up. " You've done nobly. Here's the two of them,"—and he pointed to two huddled shapes in the back of the Ford—" and old Galbraith's already on his way to Dumfries. Every cent of the money was in his house, as you guessed. And now I'll have to trouble you to come back with me and see the Chief."

" Our machines, then?" asked Pat.

The constable smiled.

" I'm sorry, sir, but these two rascals took the ditch for it when they saw us on the road. You'll find them lying there."

So Pat and Tom looked sorrowfully on the ruins of their good old Glorias. Both front wheels were buckled, both frames twisted.

" They must have come a proper smash," said Tom wistfully. " However—let's get our luggage off, though it doesn't look as if we were ever going to get the length of Glasgow even."

They strapped their packs to the stolen machines.

" Right now," said Pat to the driver of the Ford.

And off the convoy started for Dumfries once more.

. . . . . .

It was two hours before Tom and Pat had answered all the Chief's questions and received his congratulations and thanks.

" And now," he said at last, " I use my authority to forbid you going on to-night. You two boys are coming home with me, and you're going to eat a solid meal, and then you're going to sleep. We'll consider the question of your tour the day after to-morrow."

Pat and Tom smiled rather wryly to each other.

" I'm afraid the tour's hardly worth considering now, sir," said Pat. " You see, we have no machines to continue it on."

" Oh, that!" said the Chief, laughing. " Well, if the Gloria people can't pay you for a magnificent advertisement with the two machines you rescued, they're a stingier lot than I take them for. I'll get in touch with them to-morrow. Now, come along you two—bed!"

A Double-hulled Model Yacht and how to make it

By George E. Hopcroft

Mr. Hopcroft has for a number of years interested himself in the sailing and building of model yachts, his racing-boats having won many cups and medals. Double-hulled boats, or catamarans, are something of a novelty, but have been known to attain a speed of 21 miles an hour under sail alone. A model built on the lines described in the following article proved very fast.

Since the day, long ago, when Herreshoff built a small catamaran and defeated the famous " sandbaggers ", many yachts of this type have been constructed. Writing of the Herreshoff double-huller an American writer said: " She could easily have gone twice round the course whilst the fastest of the sandbaggers was making one circuit." The Canadian double-huller *Dominion*, too, was a great success.

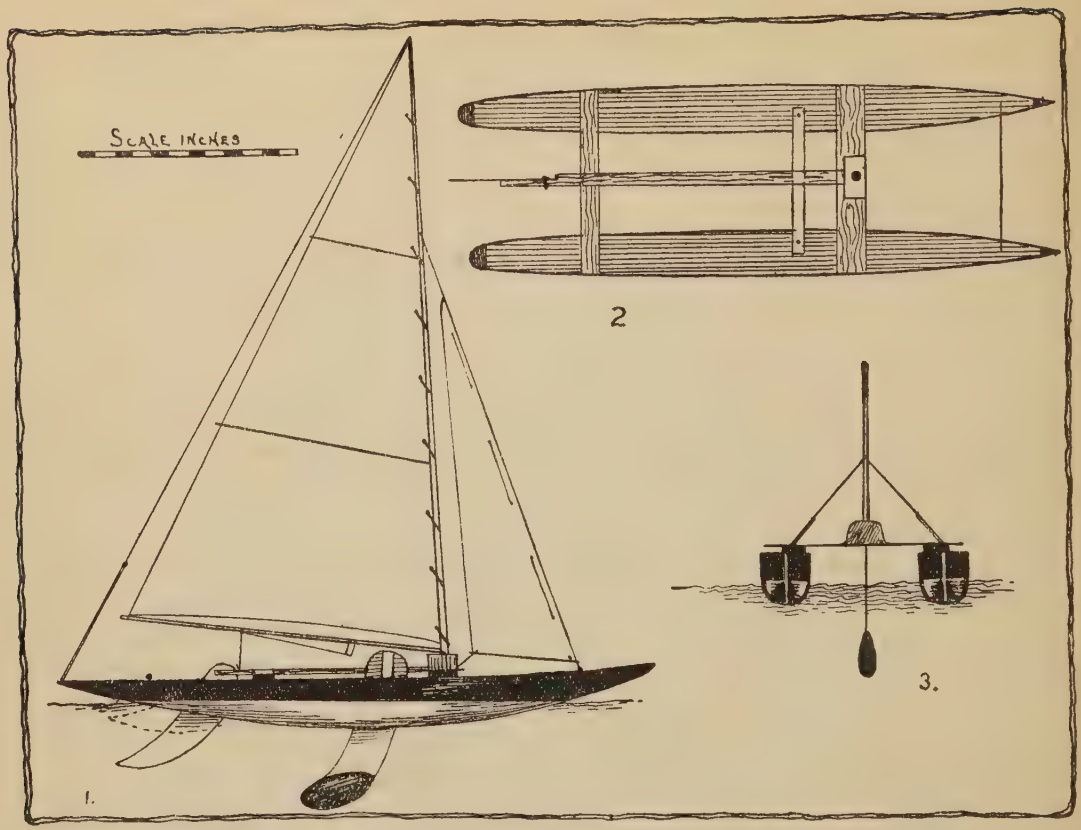
It is possible to build a model catamaran, but such boats need a certain amount of ballast. I have made many experiments with models of this type, and find that, although it is possible to sail unballasted double boats, they are tricky things to handle. Sooner or later there comes a time when they turn turtle, and, as the mast then points downwards, unless the pond is very deep at the edges, it is difficult to recover them. Lately, however, I have successfully tried a fin-keel double-huller, which can beat to windward, run or reach, and, under favourable conditions, is very fast.

There is this advantage in building a doubled-hulled boat; instead of getting a huge log, two small posts, say 2½ in. square, are all that is required for the shells of the hulls. Keep roughly to the dimensions shown on the scale plan, because this diagram has been drawn after some experiments with my latest catamaran, though it contains certain improvements upon that model. For example, I found that a little more displacement would be beneficial, for the lee hull of my boat went under water occasionally in very hard puffs.

To be on the safe side your boat should be from 30 to 33 in. long, at least 2½ in. in depth of hull, and 2½ in. wide. I do not mind if you give your boat a depth of hull of 3 in., as shown on the plan, but do not immerse the hulls more than shown on sketch 3, scale plan.

The cutting and hollowing out of the hulls is a simple job, but keep the lines convex; I have tried to give you a good idea of the shape on sketch 2, working plan. A table of offsets is hardly needed for this type of craft, but take care that you cut both hulls *exactly* alike. Note (sketch 2, working plan) that the deck is fitted on the top of the hull—not let in.

Having cut, planed, and glass-papered your hulls, hollow them out with a *small* gouge. If you are not expert at this job, however, do the hollowing before finally smoothing the hulls, for you may damage



Scale Plan

the fine ends, unless you have a good vice.

Do not use screws for fastening the decks to the hulls; black pins are much better, for your sides will be quite thin.

You will see how the connecting rods between the hulls are to be fitted on sketch 2, scale plan, and also how the ballast-fin, and the steering centre-board (which can be raised or lowered) are to be fitted (sketches 1, 2, and 3, scale plan, and sketches 3A and 3B, working plan). This method of numbering will draw your attention to the fact that these two fittings are closely connected; both the keel and the after-fin are, in fact, on the central rod.

Sketch 3A (working plan) will show you at a glance how the steering-fin or centre-board is to be fitted—a little recess must be cut so as to keep the board in line with the main-fin, which must, of course, be placed midway between the two hulls. The fitting of the main-fin is simple (see sketch 3B, working plan). F is the fin, which can be made of wood or galvanized iron, as you please; B is a wooden block to be screwed to the central rod; and S is a thin strip of tin which passes over the main fin and is attached to it, after which it is fastened to the hulls as shown on the deck plan (sketch 2, scale plan). This fitting is to stiffen the main fin. I have found it very effective.

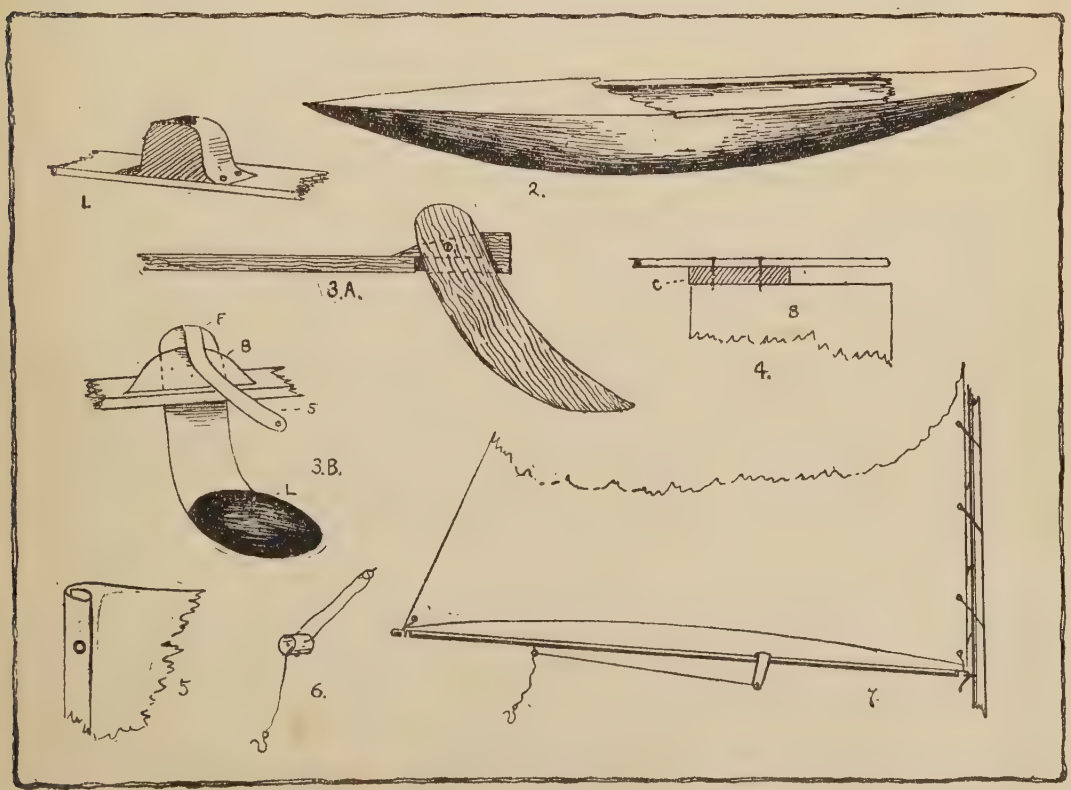
The lead bulb should not weigh more

than 12 oz., but if your boat shows any tendency to capsize—she should not do so if properly built—do not add lead, but use a deeper fin. Please remember that the secret of success with these double-hullers is to have a good reserve of buoyancy. If you have never melted lead, it is better to get a plumber to do this job for you. Keep to the shape shown on sketch 3B.

Stepping the mast on the " bridge " is not an easy job, but I found the fitting shown on sketch 1 (working plan) light and effective. It is just a strip of aluminium (or tin) bent round a piece of cork (shaded) and screwed to the bridge. You need not worry about this fitting allowing the mast to tilt forward, because the stay running from the counter to the mast-head effectually prevents the mast from moving when the jib is bowsed up taut.

The centre-board aft can be lowered several inches. For a beat to windward lower it slightly, for reaching place it a little lower, and for running before the wind slacken off your main-sheet well and lower the board as far as you can. My boat steered perfectly in this way.

I take it that I need hardly tell you how to paint your boat, but do not forget to apply a coat of priming before putting on the final colours. Two coatings of oil paint (not enamel) at least must be given after the priming. Paint should be varnished with good hard-drying varnish. Cracks



Working Plan

should be stopped with whiting mixed with gold size, but of late I have added a certain amount of paint (in powder), and just a dash of linseed oil to the mixture to make it tougher.

For so small and light a model wooden masts are—in my opinion—out of the question. Some of the thinnest garden canes (bamboos) you can get should be used for masts and spars. The sails should be made of thin nainsook. I never hem a sail with a needle myself. Turn over a rather wide hem (see sketch 5, working plan) and insert the smallest boot eyelets you can get at regular distances from each other. I pierce my sail with some sharp implement—the pointed end of a file, for example—insert the eyelet and beat it flat with an ordinary door key and a hammer. The selvedge should come on the after side of the sails (see sketch).

I should point out that it is well to raise the bridge and superstructure quite clear of the water, for catamarans do not rise very quickly to each little wave; thus, in rough water, the waves between the hulls sometimes wash up against the superstructure and—as in the case of some of my earlier models—literally " clog " the boat. Sketch 4 will show you how a piece of cork (C) can be placed under the bridge—B is the boat.

Sketch 6, working plan, shows a simple kind of round bowser, very useful for setting up the rigging. Sketch 7 on the same plan shows the whole of the boom and lower fittings of the main-sail. Note the running bowse for working the main-sheet. This little fitting is just a piece of fairly stout aluminium, bent round so as to fit the boom *loosely*. If it has a fairly long arm, as shown, it will stay where it is placed and cannot, like the block-and-tackle arrangement, get entangled. I have worked this adjustment with great success on several of my boats.

The mast should be stayed low down, as shown on sketch 3 (scale plan).

Double-hulled boats are at their best in strong breezes with smooth water. They sail at a tremendous pace with a beam wind, and, if properly managed, the ballasted ones will go to windward. They will not as a rule, however, bear " pinching ", that is, you must not keep the sails so flat as you would on, say, a deep fin-keel model. Like the Yankee scows they must be kept going or they " hang ".

I have tried one or two unballasted catamarans, but they are very tricky. Nevertheless one of them made, for a short distance, the highest speed I have ever seen a model of her size make. She was, however, but a poor performer to windward, and inclined to capsize at unexpected moments. For all-round sailing the boat I have depicted is better than the unballasted type—that is, until we have more data to go upon. There is a lot to be learnt about double-hulled craft yet. In the case of the normal boat we have the results of generations of experimenters to go upon, but with the double-huller we must find things out for ourselves.

Chasing the "Pleiad"

By Percy F. Westerman

I

There was something wrong somewhere. Roy Clayton was sure on that point, but extremely hazy on all other matters. At first the fact hardly troubled him. He was content to lie on the dusty ground and gaze with leaden eyes upon the dawn stealing over the sky. He wasn't afloat. He missed the lap of the water against the steel sides of the good ship *Pleiad*. True, the dark mass that cut the skyline thirty feet above his head appeared to be rolling, but he was not absolutely convinced that it was.

Gradually he began to notice other things. Close to his head was the trunk of a sort of small palm. His knuckles were moist with a glutinous substance that oozed from the rough scales of the grotesque tree. Mechanically he felt for his handkerchief; then, somewhat to his surprise, he found that he was not wearing his uniform jacket.

He sat up, gazing dully at his grimy shirt sleeves. As he did so he became aware of a sharp pain in the back of his head, and that his throat was dry and parched. His tongue, too, seemed too large for his mouth.

"What have I been up to?" he soliloquized. "And where am I now?"

He sought to collect his thoughts. He remembered the Old Man giving Colclough and him permission to go ashore, with the strict injunction that the two cadets were to keep to the main streets of Buenos Ayres and to be back at the landing-steps at the southern end of Avenida General Zapiola by seven o'clock.

Yes, he remembered that part. Colclough and he had carried out the skipper's instructions faithfully. They had kept together—no, they hadn't, he recalled. It was in the Avenida Alvear, on their way back to the landing-steps, that Colclough had left him to make a purchase in one of the stores. That was as far as Roy could get in his pursuit of facts. After that he recollected nothing until he found himself lying in the dust in a narrow courtyard.

"It's daybreak too!" he exclaimed, "and the *Pleiad* was to sail at midnight."

With a determined effort he gained his feet, only to roll inertly in the dust again.

"Something wrong with me," he soliloquized again, stating what was an obvious and unpleasant fact, for he now discovered that his sole clothing consisted of a shirt and a pair of trousers. Every other stitch of garment had vanished, even his socks and shoes. He felt for his cap. He was bareheaded, and there was a bump as big as a duck's egg on the top of his skull.

"I've been sandbagged; that's what it is," he declared sapiently. "What for?"

It puzzled him to think how the cowardly act had been performed in daylight in the busy Avenida Alvear. And how was he taken from there to this dismal, squalid courtyard?

"The Old Man will think I've done a bunk," he continued, communing with himself. "Wonder if he's put the police on

my track? Hope so. And will he keep the *Pleiad* at anchor until I show up?"

Making another effort, he successfully stood up, although it was a difficult matter for him to retain his balance. He was glad to lean against the stonework until his head ceased to whirl quite so much.

He put his hands into his trousers' pockets. They were empty. His purse, containing forty dollars, which he had exchanged at a ruinous rate the previous afternoon, had disappeared, likewise his watch, pocket-knife, and a bundle of treasured letters from home.

"Cleared right out," he remarked dolefully. "The blighters might have left me my shoes. Now, what course do I steer for the harbour?"

It was Roy Clayton's first voyage as a mercantile marine cadet on the full-rigged ship *Pleiad*, of and from Liverpool for Bahia, Rio, Buenos Ayres, Cape Town, Durban, Singapore, and Sydney. He was one of six youngsters under training, and already he had picked up a useful knowledge of seamanship, which he would never have acquired in a couple of years on board a steamship. His father had insisted upon a "mast and yards" training, and Mr. Clayton's judgment was not at fault.

Roy liked the life immensely, and his dismay at the thought of being left "on the beach" in Buenos Ayres was greater than his anger towards the ruffians who had sandbagged and robbed him.

Staggering like a drunken man, Roy found his way out of the dismal alley, and, after traversing a number of mean streets, gained a thoroughfare along which electric cars were already running in spite of the early hour.

Hoping against hope that the *Pleiad* had not weighed—she had been lying in the roads and had not entered any of the basins—he set his face steadily eastwards. No one seemed to pay any attention to the barefooted, scantily clad, dazed-looking lad. Foreigners who were "adrift" were only too common objects in the capital of Argentina. Two gaudily uniformed policemen did glance at him as he lurched by, but merely shrugged their shoulders after the manner of Spanish-speaking people.

At last Roy recognized a thoroughfare as the Avenida Alvear. Within fifty yards was the spot where he had parted with Colclough and where started the period of oblivion that had ended in such a disconcerting fashion. It was now a fairly easy matter for the barefooted youth to find his way to the landing-steps.

When he arrived there his worst fears were realized. The *Pleiad* was no longer at anchor a couple of miles off shore. Unless he were greatly mistaken he could discern her topsails, t'gallants, and royals as, hull down, she was beating to wind'ard and well towards the Uruguayan shore.

"That's done it!" ejaculated Roy.

II

Roy Clayton was not going to own himself beaten. His one idea was to rejoin his ship—but how? Here he was, penniless and friendless in a South American port, ignorant of the language and at a loss as to whom to apply for advice.

The idea of seeking the assistance of the British Consul never entered into his head. He might, had he but known it, have gone to the Tigre Sailing Club, a fair proportion of its members being British. There he would certainly have found a benevolent motor-boat owner who could have put him on board the *Pleiad* in three or four hours, and would have been only too pleased to befriend a fellow-countryman. But Roy knew of none of these things. He was planning and scheming to score off his own bat.

He did not feel hungry, notwithstanding the fact that he had eaten nothing for fourteen hours; but he was thirsty. His throat burned like a limekiln in spite of frequent visits to a fountain at the end of the Avenida General Zapiola.

The docks and basins were crowded with shipping, and although vessels flying the British Red ensign were not so numerous as of yore, there were at least twenty of various tonnages. Of these five or six were showing Blue Peter.

Roy visited each of them in turn. His first question was invariably, "Where are you bound?" Sometimes he received a correct answer, but frequently the seamen "pulled his leg". Not that it mattered, for of all the British vessels about to sail not one was bound for the Cape. Had he wanted to return to England he might have managed it without much difficulty; but home did not enter into his calculations. It was the *Pleiad* that was his sole thought —how he could get on a Cape-bound steamer and rejoin his ship.

His efforts were not altogether fruitless. A third officer on board one of the vessels questioned him, and out of pity gave him a pair of canvas shoes and an old peaked cap. In addition he slipped five dollars into Roy's hand and wished him the best of luck.

Thus the day wore on. At length Clayton began to feel hungry, and twenty-five centavos went in satisfying the inner man. At that rate, and in addition the cost of a bed, his five dollars would not last very long.

Having made inquiries of all the British ships, Roy began to wonder whether he could sign on on board a foreigner. His first attempt in that direction was a Yankee tanker. A seaman at the gangway promptly booted him off with the remark that "this hyer hooker ain't a home for hoboes".

Roy left the ship hurriedly.

"What's the trouble, son?"

Clayton turned and saw a seaman regarding him with rough sympathy. He was not a prepossessing sort of man. He was short in stature, but tremendously broad across the shoulders and heavily built from the hips upwards. His legs were bowed, as if unable to bear the weight of his body. His face was rugged and deeply wrinkled. His hair was red, his eyebrows bushy, and his beard grew high on his cheeks.

"What's amiss, son?" he inquired again.

Roy told him. The man was a good listener, and made no remark until the lad had finished his tale.

"Play euchre?" inquired the man.

Clayton looked too astonished to reply. The question seemed so utterly irrelevant.

"Can't you?" persisted the questioner

Roy shook his head.

"It is not such a very difficult matter to master the intricacies of the game," continued the man, speaking with quite a public school accent.

"But what has that to do with me?" asked Roy.

"Just this, sonny," replied the man, relapsing into the vernacular; "I'll get you a berth on the *Andrea Doria*. Old Antonio the cap'n 'll do anything to humour me. All I want for my trouble is for you to play euchre with me in the dog-watches an' such like times when things are slack. Never did take to playing with greasy dagoes; so what d'ye say?"

"Is she bound for Cape Town?"

"Sure, an' a sight of other ports as well; but that don't signify. She's an Italian tramp, with a measly skipper and a rotten crew of dagoes, but she'll serve your purpose. My name's Murchison, but my pals call me Coppernob. Those that ain't my pals do so too—only they don't let me hear 'em," he added grimly.

"Right-o, Mr. Murchison," replied Roy.

"I'll take on; but I can't pay you for your trouble——"

"You weren't asked to," rejoined Murchison, with a show of asperity. "I told you my conditions—euchre in the dog-watches and at other times when convenient. Come along, we'll tackle Signor Antonio, and then we'll see about getting you some slops—kit, gear, dunnage, or whatever you care to call it."

The *Andrea Doria* was lying alongside the wharf with steam up. She was a rusty wall-sided steamer of about 3000 tons, and in her prime had been owned by a Clyde-side firm. That was a quarter of a century ago. Her present cargo consisted almost entirely of live-stock—Argentine horses and cattle for South Africa.

Mr. Murchison walked up the gangway, and without any formality addressed the first mate, an olive-featured Neapolitan.

"Where's Antonio?" he asked.

The first mate evinced no resentment at being so curtly addressed by a deck hand.

"Go seeka him up dar," he replied, indicating the "island" between the fore and main holds, above which towered the bridge and chart-house.

Coppernob led his recruit along the grimy deck, past rows of temporary horse-stalls, and up an iron ladder until they arrived at the captain's cabin.

"Cheerio, Antonio, old sport!" exclaimed Mr. Murchison. "I've brought you another hand. Smart young fellow, an' all that sort, you know."

The Old Man, a wizened, undersized man whose only sign of authority was a gold-laced cap, looked at Roy with an air of indecision.

"No want 'nother 'and," he protested.

"Yes you do, Antonio; you know you do," countered Mr. Murchison with conviction. "Didn't you say you were short-handed when we got into that capful of wind on the run down from Bahia? Get him signed on, and see that he gets an advance note. He's on the rocks at present. You've got good value there, Antonio, old sport."

The "old sport" shrugged his shoulders.

"Ver' well," he agreed weakly, and turned to forage in a locker for some paper.

Ten minutes later Roy Clayton was signed on as a deck hand on the S.S. *Andrea Doria*.

III

From that time Roy was virtually a prisoner. Once he had received an "advance"—half a month's pay—he was not allowed out of the ship. His "slops"—a canvas suit, oilskin coat, and rubber boots—he bought from an Argentine chandler who was doing a roaring and profitable trade on board; and by the time he had paid for a few necessaries Roy had less than a couple of dollars left out of his fortnight's pay.

For the rest of the day Clayton saw nothing of his mysterious benefactor. More, he suspected, rightly it proved, that Mr. Murchison was not on board.

But the lad was far from idle. Not that he wanted to be, for he was of an energetic nature. Under the direction of Beppo, the first mate, he was set to work with three or four Italian deck hands to sling the horses in their stalls, a tricky operation, for the animals were in a half-wild state and did not take kindly to conditions on ship board.

Roy ate very little that night for "tea"—the last meal of the day. It was an unsatisfying repast, consisting of macaroni, boiled maize, and a kind of soup in which olive oil was conspicuous by its flavour. The Italians ate with avidity, but Clayton wondered how a man could exist and work hard on such—to him—unappetizing fare.

At eight bells he turned in, sleeping in

She was making straight for the centre of the storm

a box-like bunk in the forepeak with nearly a score of jabbering Italians, who smoked cigarettes until they fell asleep, as his companions for the voyage.

Rather ruefully he contrasted his present quarters with the plain but scrupulously clean cadets' mess on board the *Pleiad*; but, realizing that it was a means to an end, he accepted the altered conditions as cheerfully as he could, pulled his rough blanket well over his shoulders, and was soon fast asleep.

Someone shook him by the arm. He awoke to find the pale dawn filtering in through the small skylight. The *Andrea Doria* was under way. The forepeak was deserted save for himself and Mr. Murchison.

"What cheer, Roy!" exclaimed Coppernob, with a broad grin. "Here's a pannikin of tea and a biscuit. Mop that down, and I'll give you your first lesson at euchre."

Clayton stretched out his hand for the tea. Mr. Murchison also had a tin cup full of the beverage, but from its aroma it was evident that his tea was flavoured with rum.

"Didn't I ought to be on deck?" asked Roy. "Where are the others?"

"Don't fash thysen, lad, as they say in Yorkshire," rejoined Mr. Murchison, with the utmost composure. "In other words, take it easy. You're excused duty, since Old Antonio knows you're a new hand. And how about me, you ask—or rather you'd like to? Well, I'll let you into the know—or make you wise, according to Uncle Sam's version."

Roy was considerably puzzled over his strange shipmate. It seemed a remarkable thing that this red-haired little fellow could do practically as he liked on board.

"I don't mean to do a stroke of work on this old hooker," continued Murchison. "Old Antonio knows that too, and he's too cautious to own up against me. I'm a rolling stone that gathers no moss—nor money either," he added, with a grin. "Now then, let's make a start."

Clayton had hardly handled a card before in his life. Cards did not interest him in the slightest degree, but, reflecting that it was up to him to keep his part of the bargain, he entered into the game with well-simulated interest. So much so that before the *Andrea Doria* was three days out he was quite an adept at euchre.

Captain Antonio and Beppo, the first mate, offered no objection, or if they had any they dared not show it. Roy had to attend to the horses and cattle for two hours of the forenoon watch; beyond that he was practically at Coppernob's beck and call.

There was no denying the fact that Murchison was a boaster. He claimed to have shot seven men at different periods of his career, and that he had yet to meet a "tough" as good as himself. Yet he made no attempt to bully his young partner. He was invariably good-tempered with him, even when Roy beat him at his own game.

One night there was a brawl in the fo'c'sle. How it originated Clayton had not the faintest idea, but in the course of the dispute one of the dagoes said something to Murchison. The latter did not reply. The Italian grew angry at Murchison's silence and drew a knife.

In an instant Coppernob had him covered with a revolver. The knife dropped from the dago's nerveless hand and stuck in the deck. Murchison, still keeping the muzzle of the pistol pointed at the Italian's head, picked up the knife and threw it through the open scuttle. Then he said something in Italian to the aggressor.

"I've told the blighter I'm going to punch his head," he explained to Roy. "He's a much bigger fellow than I am, but I'm going to dust the deck with him, and if one of those other greasy guys as

much as raises a finger to help him I'll let daylight into him. Keep an eye on that clock, Roy, and call the end of each two-minute round."

It was a weird sight in the dim lamplight of the fo'c'sle. The dago, looking very white about the gills, stood alone, his compatriots squeezing themselves against the bulkhead and hardly daring to whisper.

Murchison advanced slowly. His opponent gave back, until without warning he threw himself upon his adversary, swinging his arms and hacking with this sea-booted feet.

The little red-haired man delivered one straight left. The dago, lifted completely off his feet, crashed against the iron bulkhead.

The fight was over in ten seconds.

Giuseppe, the vanquished, never left his bunk for the next twenty-four hours.

IV

On the seventh day out from Buenos Ayres the *Andrea Doria* struck the path of a cyclone. On the course she was laying she was making straight for the danger zone—the centre of the storm. Even Roy, with his limited knowledge of the sea, knew this, and he communicated his fears to his strange shipmate.

Murchison shrugged his shoulders. The only thing that appeared to trouble him was the fact that euchre was out of the question with the old tramp rolling and pitching as she did.

She was making bad weather of it. Her fo'c'sle and well-deck were constantly under water as the furious, white-crested waves poured in over her bows, sending showers of spray high over her salt-rimmed funnel. Above the shrill shriek of the wind rose the frantic bellowing of the terrified cattle and the almost human groans of the unfortunate horses as they were flung from side to side of their unpadded stalls, with the result that dozens of the poor animals had broken legs before the cyclone had lasted twenty minutes.

"I'll just go on deck and see what Old Antonio's doing," remarked Murchison, in a casual tone. "He's apt to get a bit jumpy when it's blowing fresh. Coming?"

Roy was only too glad to accept the invitation. It was infinitely preferable to be on the bridge to being cooped up in the close atmosphere of the saloon, whither the two shipmates had repaired on the off-chance that the interrupted game might be resumed.

It was a perilous journey. The *Andrea Doria* had no bulwarks, only an iron guard rail between the poop and the raised deck amidships, and, in spite of the slight protection afforded by the latter, green seas were sweeping completely across the ship for'ard and aft.

Drenched to the skin in icy-cold water and more than once swept off his feet by the almost irresistible swirl, although he managed to retain his grasp upon the guard rail, Roy succeeded in following his strange shipmate to the bridge.

Even as they gained the elevated perch a furious sea swept over her bows. The foremast snapped off like a carrot, six feet above the deck, and went crashing over the side, derricks and all. Simultaneously the engine-room telegraph clanged.

Without ceremony Murchison burst into the wheel-house, in which were the skipper, the first mate, and a couple of hands at the steam steering-gear. One glance at the indicator showed that Old Antonio had rung down for "stop".

Pulling Clayton in after him Murchison shut the door. It was now possible to speak, and the comparative warmth of the enclosed wheel-house was a haven of comfort to the turmoil without.

Going straight to the telegraph Murchi-

"S'pose you run away and play"

son rang for half-speed ahead, then, motioning the quartermaster out of the way, he told Roy to carry on.

"Bring her on N 20 E, laddie," he ordered. "With luck we'll claw out of the storm centre yet. Now, Antonio, old sport, you look a bit white about the gills. No use calling on the saints for help, you know, if you don't try to help yourself. S'pose you run away and play—have a cigarette to steady your nerves. And you too, Beppo."

The two officers were positively green with fright, yet they obediently filed out of the wheel-house followed by the equally abject hands.

Murchison kicked the door to, and then turned to his young companion.

"We've got to keep our ends up and show a good example to these dagoes," he remarked. "It'll be a long trick for you, sonny, but you've got to do it."

He glanced at the compass. In spite of the terrific hammering the *Andrea Doria* was receiving, Roy was keeping the tramp within a couple of degrees either way of her course.

Roy hardly knew what to think of himself. He was conscious of a peculiar sensation in his throat as he gazed at the foredeck of the tramp during the long intervals when she shook herself clear of the smother of angry sea. He knew he "had the wind up". He would have admitted the fact readily enough if he had been questioned on the matter. But, on the other hand, he rather enjoyed the situation. It was priceless to see the cool way in which Murchison had handled the skipper of the

tramp. It put Clayton on his mettle when Murchison appealed to him to keep his end up, and, with the sense of responsibility, the lad found that his former feeling of dismay had almost completely passed away.

But the danger was far from being over. Before a quarter of an hour had passed since Murchison had "taken over", the propeller ceased to revolve, dense clouds of steam issued from the engine-room fidleys, and the tramp began to lose way, her head falling off in spite of Roy's efforts to meet her with additional weather helm.

Muttering under his breath, Murchison savagely jerked the telegraph lever to "Full Ahead". There was no response, but instead a crowd of greasers and firemen began to pour through the engine-room hatchway.

"Hang on here, Clayton!" exclaimed his shipmate. "I'll bring those white-livered bounders to reason."

Old Coppernob was away for nearly ten minutes. Once or twice Roy fancied he heard the report of a firearm above the roar of the gale, but before Murchison returned the propeller was revolving again.

"What a jamboree, sonny," he remarked, when he re-entered the wheel-house. "I've herded 'em back and locked the hatch-cover on them. Chucked their hands in 'cause there was a foot of water over the engine-room floor. Told 'em that when there was six feet of it 'twould be time to think of clearing out—not before. Now then, I'll ring for 'Half Speed Ahead'. She'll make better weather of it, I guess."

The prompt response showed that the Italian engineers had taken their lesson to heart, and the *Andrea Doria*, with reduced revolutions of her propeller, was no longer severely punished by the breaking waves. Momentarily she was drawing away from the danger zone.

"Tired, sonny?" inquired Murchison, after Roy had spent a couple of hours at the helm. "If so, I'll rout out one of the dagoes."

Clayton glanced at the clock. He had had no idea of the swift flight of time. In his sense of elation—his feeling of having triumphed over danger—his "trick" had simply flown.

"Quite all right," he replied. "I'm good for another two hours."

"Glad to hear you say that," rejoined his red-haired shipmate. "We don't want blooming foreigners up here just yet awhile. Carry on, Roy, while I get those skunks up for'ard to make a move."

Murchison made another flying visit from the bridge, with the result that a dozen scared-looking deck hands came aft from the shelter of the fo'c'sle and were set to work to clear up the raffle on the well-deck. The hand-pumps, too, were manned to assist the already sorely tried donkey-engine pumps, the while the wheezy antiquated engines were driving the *Andrea Doria* at a modest four knots through the now moderating seas.

"We've won through!" exclaimed Murchison, when he returned to the wheel-house. "I'll send up your relief, Roy, and I'll tell old Antonio he can take over the command of his rotten hooker. Look up Umberto, the captain's steward, on your way for'ard and tell him to let you have a couple of packs of cards for me."

V

But Murchison did not immediately retire into his shell after graciously permitting the incompetent and cowardly skipper to resumecommand.

Utterly reckless in his dealings with his fellow-men, especially the dago crew of the tramp, he had a peculiarly tender feeling

for dumb animals. Roy had seen him floor the cook because the latter had thrown a butcher's knife at the ship's dog; and he had severely booted a deck hand whom he had caught in the act of kicking one of the horses.

It was the unfortunate horses and cattle that now stood between Murchison and his absorbing euchre.

Telling off a party to man a temporary pair of sheer-legs, for with the loss of the foremast no derricks were available, Murchison examined every horse. Those badly injured—and several had broken limbs—he shot, and had their carcasses thrown overboard. The "bad cases" amongst the cattle too shared the same fate, in spite of Captain Antonio's protests. Cattle, even if maimed, would fetch a price in Cape Town for slaughtering purposes, he avowed; but Murchison would have none of it.

Assisted by Roy, he tended the still terrified survivors of the living cargo, both shipmates toiling like Trojans until they had done all they could to relieve the condition of the dumb animals.

"Now, son," said Coppernob briskly, when the humane work was completed, 'tell Umberto to bring along a couple of mugs of cocoa and then we'll get to work."

Roy knew that it was useless to protest. Now that the fight with the gale was over he was beginning to feel the inevitable reaction. He was hungry and thirsty, as well as mentally and bodily tired, but the demands of the card-playing zealot had to be complied with.

They played for a couple of hours, Clayton munching biscuit and sipping cocoa, while his companion, having gulped down a pannikin of cocoa and rum, paid no further attention to the cravings of the inner man.

Murchison's whole soul seemed to be centred in the game. He had apparently forgotten all about his brief period of command of the *Andrea Doria*; he failed to notice his companion's tiredness, although once or twice he rallied him sharply on account of his game not being up to the usual standard, and finally he flung the cards upon the deck with the remark that it was "no use playing with a bloke that let his wits go wool-gathering".

Roy thankfully took the hint and turned in.

Next morning Murchison was repentant and apologized handsomely; but whether the repentance was genuine or merely actuated by a desire to get Clayton to play again the lad could not fathom.

Thus several days passed. Coppernob had reverted to the position he held before the storm. He did not do a stroke of work. The ship's officers made not the slightest effort to get him to take his trick, nor did they try to make Roy undertake any routine. As for the men, although they scowled at Clayton because he was not allowed to work, they were too much in awe of the little red-haired man who was so ready with his pistol to attempt to harm the lad.

Roy could not help a certain amount of admiration for his strange shipmate. Murchison was undoubtedly a man of good education who was down on his luck. He never gave any sign of wishing to improve his position; he seemed quite content to loaf on board a rotten Italian tramp steamer and to spend the greater part of his waking hours in playing euchre. But it was solely for the love of the game, and not because he possessed the insatiable craving of a confirmed gambler. He never played for money—at least with Roy Clayton—and his zest of the game was none the less, and only once had he shown any sign of temper towards his young companion. When the latter beat him at cards he seemed delighted; when Roy made a palpable mistake he would give him a look

of deep reproof, as if the blunder had caused him physical pain.

And yet this waster had proved himself to be a man. Practically single-handed he had taken charge of things when the officers and crew of the *Andrea Doria* were panic-stricken by the storm. But for him the tramp would have been lying fathoms deep on the bed of the South Atlantic. Then, too, he showed a strong love for dumb animals. That was greatly in his favour.

Then came his relapse into a state of utter apathy, save for the passionate craving for the game of euchre.

On the second day after the storm Murchison and Roy were engaged in their seemingly interminable contest, when a series of shouts and yells came from the spar-deck.

The two shipmates exchanged glances, then Coppernob laid down his hand.

"Let's git," he remarked briefly.

They went on deck and found a mob of excited, gesticulating Italians gathered abaft the mainmast. On the deck lay one of the crew, moaning in agony. One of the derrick purchases had required renewing, and in the operation a wire had parted, causing a man to fall violently to the deck.

Unceremoniously pushing aside several of the men, Murchison knelt beside the victim of the accident. It was the fellow who had drawn a knife upon Coppernob, and who had been severely punished by the latter in consequence.

A hasty examination showed that the luckless Italian had sustained a double fracture of the right arm and a broken collar-bone.

"Roy, old son!" exclaimed Murchison, "cut off and bring along the Old Man's medicine-chest. Be slick about it."

Clayton was "slick". Quickly he returned and placed the chest on the deck.

"Bandages — splints — in that lower drawer," ordered Murchison briefly. "That bottle—the third on the left—right!"

Within two minutes the injured man was under chloroform. Deftly, and with the skill of an experienced surgeon, Murchison set the fractured bones and applied splints and bandages.

"He'll do," he announced. "Take that chest back to old Antonio, Roy, and then we'll carry on with the game."

Telling his shipmates to carry the injured man below, Murchison turned and ambled off to his den to await Clayton's reappearance.

After that they played steadily for two hours.

VI

Fair weather favoured the *Andrea Doria* for several days, and at a modest five knots she ploughed her way towards the still distant Cape.

During his brief periods of leisure Roy used to go on deck and scan the horizon in the hope of catching a glimpse of the *Pleiad's* snowy canvas. Given a fair wind she would reel off the 3600 odd miles between Buenos Ayres and Cape Town in less time than the old tramp; but it was quite possible that she had to be hove-to during the storm that had all but ended the career of the *Andrea Doria*, and following the gale the wind had been persistently from the east'ard, so that supposing the *Pleiad* covered 240 miles a day at ten knots she would only "make good" a distance of about 80 miles, the while the tramp, plugging dead in the eye of the wind, had a daily run of between 100 and 120 miles.

No sight of the *Pleiad's* t'gallants and royals rewarded Roy's eager eyes. In fact for several days no sail was in sight—there was nothing but a wide expanse of long,

sullen rollers. Not even a gull or an albatross appeared to give warning that land was but a few hundred miles away.

At length the Table Mountain rose above the horizon. In another six or eight hours, all being well, the *Andrea Doria* would berth alongside the wharf at Cape Town.

Roy began to feel elated, so much so that Murchison had to remind him gently that they were supposed to be playing euchre. But the lad had less zest than usual for the game. The "means to an end" had almost reached the end of its tether.

It was about four in the afternoon that the *Andrea Doria* reported herself by international code to the signal station on the Lion's Rump. Then, to Roy's surprise, she apparently ported helm and stood to the south'ard, before he had a chance of sighting the shipping in Table Bay.

"Fresh orders, I guess," remarked Murchison imperturbably. "'Tisn't the first time, not by a long chalk."

Clayton's face fell.

"Where are we bound for, then?" he asked.

Coppernob passed the question on to the first mate, who happened to be standing by.

"We are to discharge our cargo at Port Elizabeth," was the reply, given in Italian and translated for Roy's benefit.

"Only a matter of three hundred and sixty miles more," added Murchison.

It was not a cheering piece of information. Clayton would have to find his way back from Port Elizabeth to Cape Town, and even then perhaps he would be too late. He did not fancy the prospect of chasing the *Pleiad* across the Indian Ocean in a packet similar to the *Andrea Doria*. But, realizing that it was no use making a moan about it, Roy kept a stiff upper lip and signalized his determination by soundly whacking Murchison at three games out of four.

VII

Port Elizabeth at last! It was not an inviting spot to land a cargo of horses and cattle. The open roadstead was beset by a long swell, making the *Andrea Doria* roll heavily.

Determined to make the best of a bad job and find his way back to Cape Town on the strength of half a month's pay, Roy interviewed the Old Man and asked for his discharge.

"Deescharge—ah!" exclaimed Captain Antonio, throwing up his hands in mock dismay. "What for you seeka deescharge? You make signa on for voyage; den no can do go ashore at Porta Elizabeet."

"But I signed on for a run from Buenos Ayres to Cape Town, sir," protested Clayton.

"No, no!" declared the Old Man, with a sly look and a tone of triumph in his voice. "Looka here. Dis you signa. Me translate."

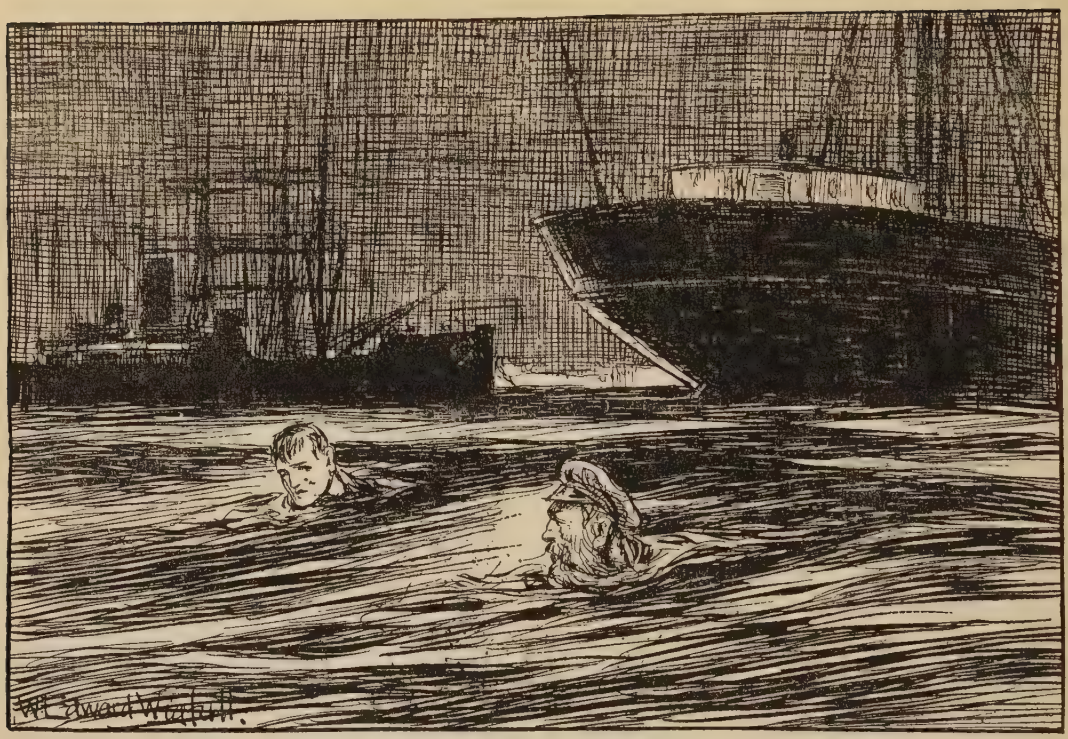
Roy realized that he was "had". He had signed a contract written in Italian, under the impression that he had engaged for a voyage only as far as Cape Town. What he had actually and unknowingly committed himself to was to serve as a deck hand on board the *Andrea Doria* for the whole voyage, which might extend over a period of twelve months.

"You no deserta," continued Captain Antonio. "No one allowed to land at Porta Elizabeet widout permit, or two year in preeson."

Roy did not attempt to argue the point. He promptly sought out his shipmate Murchison and told him of what had occurred at the interview.

Coppernob laughed.

"He's done you, laddie," he declared. "It's my fault in a way. I ought to have seen what the wily old dago got you to



They swam ashore just before two bells

sign. And it's true what he says about deserters. The police are mighty smart.

"I'd risk that," rejoined Roy.

"Without a cent in your pocket," Murchison reminded him, "you'd be properly in the cart. Buzz off and get another pack of cards. While you're gone I'll try to think of some plan."

Clayton departed on his errand cheerfully. He had great faith in Murchison, especially when the latter roused himself to action. But it was doubtful whether Murchison could compel old Antonio to release his recently engaged deck hand. On the high seas Murchison was afraid of no one. In a South African harbour it was different. The skipper could obtain assistance from the shore, even to the extent of calling in the armed police.

Captain Antonio's sole reason for refusing to allow Roy to take his discharge was the fact that the lad kept Murchison in a good temper. Murchison had the Old Man under his thumb, and on that account the captain dare not discharge him, and apparently he was saddled with a somewhat truculent and generally idle seaman for the duration of the voyage. Murchison, absolutely without ambition, was content to lead a loafing life on board the *Andrea Doria*, since his "job" entailed no hardships and no exertion except in circumstances similar to that of the storm on the voyage across the South Atlantic.

Presently Roy returned.

"I've been puzzling things out," remarked Murchison, absently opening the pack and shuffling the cards. "The best

thing for us to do is for both of us to do a bunk. I've a few pounds by me. Old Antonio daren't set the police on *my* track. So we'll hook it together——"

"But——" began Roy in protest.

"'But me no buts'," quoth Murchison. "If I'm going to let you row in my galley, I'm not going to be choked off. I've rather a fancy to see what Cape Town is like ashore. Seen it more'n once from the sea, but I never went on the beach. We'll have to swim for it, laddie, and take our chances with the sharks. Are you game?"

VIII

They swam ashore just before two bells in the middle watch, and effected a landing on the sea-wall at the end of Palmerston Street. Crossing the railway they fetched St. George's Park by a roundabout route, where they hung about until dawn.

It was Murchison's idea to make for a railway station some distance from Port Elizabeth, but before so doing it was imperative that they should obtain shore-going kit: "Even if we have to break into a show," he declared.

Before they had covered half a dozen miles a Cape cart came along the road in the same direction as they were going.

"We'll ask for a lift," said Coppernob. "The boss doesn't look like a policeman."

The cart drew nearer. Under the hood sat a short, full-bearded man who looked like a farmer. At a sign from Murchison he drew up.

"Lift?" he inquired laconically.

"Sure thing," replied Murchison.

"Got a pack of cards on you?" demanded the driver of the cart, with a twinkle in his eye.

"Bless me, if it isn't good old George!" exclaimed Murchison, shaking the man's hand. "Roy, old son, we've struck lucky! The first fellow we meet is my old pal George Dwyer, and I haven't set eyes on him for—how long, George?"

"Five years," rejoined Dwyer. "Back in '18 when we landed at Grimsby after the old *Sampson* was mined. By Jove! 'Tis a strange world this. What are you doing here? Jump up and ease your jaw tackle as we go. My farm's a couple of miles over yonder, and I guess you'll be wanting breakfast."

The chance meeting proved to be the end of Murchison's wanderings. His old chum wanted assistance on his farm, and Murchison jumped at the offer. It meant hard work with the compensating advantage to him—that Dwyer was a good euchre player.

At midday Roy bade his former shipmate farewell. It was a lucky stroke too for Clayton when, provided with clothes and more than enough money for his fare, he boarded the next train for Mossel Bay and Cape Town.

His luck was in. The *Pleiad* was lying at anchor in Table Bay; but there was no fatted calf for *this* prodigal son. The Old Man saw to that; he stopped Cadet Clayton's leave for six weeks, which, according to Roy's idea, was a sorry reward for his zeal in rejoining his ship.

But when Roy heard that the *Pleiad* was sailing that day, bound for Bombay, and that the run would take the best part of two months without putting into any intermediate port, he realized that the Old Man's bark was worse than his bite.

The chief thing, in the cadet's opinion, was that he was once more on board the good ship *Pleiad*; for the present nothing else mattered much.

The Caterham Cup

By W. Kersley Holmes

I

"A waste of good ink, Jiggy, mark you, a waste of good ink."

"Where, what?"

Tom Hinchcliff removed one hand from the pocket of his footer shorts, and, with a lean forefinger, underlined a phrase in an announcement just pinned upon the sports notice-board, reading aloud as he did so: "*or first overtakes the Hares.*"

Jiggy Weston, he who had asked wherein consisted the waste of ink, murmured to himself the whole sentence:

"*The Caterham Cup will be held for a year by the House whose representative passes through the Big Gate first, or first overtakes the Hares, bringing with him a specimen of each variety of coloured paper.*" Then he said: "You're very cocksure we can diddle 'em, Spider. What's your game? You and I can keep pegging on all right, I know, but, with no bags to carry, and no trail to lay——"

"And without that chased feeling, you were going to say if I'd waited, there are several men running who have the legs of us. I know it, Jiggy, but we shall run with our heads as well as with our legs."

"You're a wily old bird, Spider, but I wish you wouldn't talk like a book. Just come quietly up to No. 7, and tell me what's in your head. You've lured me into this hare stunt, and I might as well know now how we're going to pull it off."

"We shall be covered with glory, my boy—glory, not to mention—but never mind. I'll tell you while we change."

The secret palaver—which presently took place in Study No. 7, shared by Spider Hinchcliff and Jiggy Weston, both of the Fifth Form at St. Mungo's—did not seem to leave the latter entirely contented in his mind, if we may judge from its concluding interchange. Said he:

"It's all very well for you. Look at your size. If you stood behind a lamp-post nobody would see you. You could climb through one of my collars."

"That's all right, Jiggy. I vow there's bags of room even for a behemoth like you. But we can try beforehand and settle it."

"Try beforehand? Not I! You say it's all right, so it's your hunt. If I do it once, on the 19th, that'll be quite often enough."

"Very well, we'll leave it at that. And do try, Jiggy, not to bellow when you talk. If our cunning scheme isn't known all over the school already, it's only because with all your noise you're mostly incoherent to anyone but me, who have done so much to bring you up like a little man."

"Oh, do dry up! I suppose you intend to do some training?"

"Yea, verily! We'll show 'em running too."

II

A feature of the athletic year at St. Mungo's was the big paper-chase that took place on the last Saturday before the

Christmas holidays. Originated by an Old Boy who was a cross-country fanatic, and who had presented for annual competition the trophy named after him—the Caterham Cup—it had an established place in the tradition of the school, in spite of the fact that the average St. Mungo boy, like the majority of boys in general, regarded a five or six mile slog across meadow and plough as a frightful fag. Entering for the race was not, of course, compulsory, but, as the first ten runners home counted for places, the esprit de corps of each House was strong enough to inspire all but the real slackers and crocks to enter and try to finish. Considerable *kudos* went to the House which scored most points, but, of course, the pride of the day was worn by the House to which belonged the man first home—the man who brought under its roof the Caterham Cup, and whose name was engraved thereon.

This year Hinchcliff and Weston had volunteered to be the hares. Neither was likely to prove a winner if he ran with the pack, but Hinchcliff had the reputation of being a wily fellow who would lay an interesting trail. As for Weston—he generally did what Spider Hinchcliff suggested, and regretted it later. Thus, while on principle hating the business of laying the trail for a paper-chase, he had been coaxed into it by his chum.

"It won't be nearly such a sweat as trying to overtake some other wretched pair," Spider had said. "Generally, I know, it's awful, but that's only because most hares trust to their legs alone."

"There's too much to think about," growled Jiggy.

"I'll do your share; all we have to do is to keep on laying the trail, and to put a good hearty dollop of red, green, blue, and yellow paper at four points in the run. We're allowed to make two breaks of not more than fifty yards. What could be simpler?"

"I suppose you've got some beastly game in mind concerning those breaks? If the committee knew you half as well as I do, they wouldn't let you have a hand in it."

"They know that nobody knows the country as I do."

"If you'd turn out to footer practices and nets a bit more regularly, you wouldn't know it so well. You prowl about the map like a poacher."

"And you'll see the use of it, my boy, when you lay the trail for the Caterham with me."

On the day of the paper-chase the weather was vile—vile, that is, for almost any purpose except staying indoors or cross-country running. Of all people the keen cross-country man is the most independent of meteorological conditions, and the great Caterham, when presenting the Cup, had laid it down, as one of the rules of the race, that it should take place on the appointed day, whatever the weather might be.

On this occasion a piercing east wind was blowing, bringing with it every now and then a bitterly cold shower. The sky was an expanse of grim, uncompromising grey from horizon to horizon, and had the entrants for the race been susceptible to the influences of scenery, they would have found the black look of the countryside—bare wood, dark plough, and sodden meadow—melancholy in the extreme.

Few of them noticed the weather conditions, save with some such phrase as, "A foul day!" or "Better running than standing still, anyhow."

"I bet that lunatic Hinchcliff will take us through the river at least once," said Macrae of Wardrop's House to his friend and rival, Wayne of Barnwell's, as they

walked towards the Big Gate, where the race was to start.

" Likely enough. He's barely human, and he's been bouncing so wildly that no doubt he's got some very deep game on."

Merridew of Taylor's came jogging up and fell into step beside them. Merridew was perhaps the favourite for the Caterham Cup—he was long and slender of limb and had the heart of a lion, and yet, before a test such as this punishing race across country, was all strung up with nerves.

" Wish we were off," he said to the other two, and his teeth were chattering. " Running in a sweater, Wayne? I should like it at the start, but I get heated up after the first mile. Oh, my aunt, look at this!"

" This " was an odd little figure in a short coat, beneath which showed bare knees, crimson with cold, and a pair of gym shoes. Above the upturned collar of the coat showed a pair of crimson ears and a ruffled golden head.

" Yes," said Wayne, " there goes the Speck —the Last Hope of Russel's House. And he may look like a truant cherub, but you can take my word for it he'll finish the course though he has to keep running till to-morrow morning."

" That's right, Dick. I've watched that kid out on training runs with the rest of his kind, and he's never ready to stop. Hullo, Speck, here a minute!"

At Macrae's call the small boy checked in his amble, changed direction, and came up to the big fellows with a shy smile.

" Going to carry off the Caterham Cup, what?" Wayne asked him, and the Speck grinned, grinning more broadly when Merridew added, " Don't overdo it, Speck. We want you to live to run another day."

" What shall you do if the trail crosses the river?" Wayne asked him.

" I shan't mind," said the Speck in his childish voice. " I can swim all right."

" Now, that's the spirit, my brave! That's the stuff! And here's Benson pawing the ground—you watch Benson, Speck, and don't let him pass you."

Benson, the likeliest man in the Head's House, took no notice of the simple jest, though it was intended to include him as well as the small boy. Benson, big-boned, powerful, and rather morose, didn't like little boys encouraged in any circumstances.

" Piece of rot allowing a kid like that to enter," he growled, as the Speck withdrew himself from the august company of his seniors and joined an excited group of his peers. " They only crowd us at the start and make the thing ridiculous."

Merridew, prancing " knees up " to try to warm himself, took up the cudgels.

" Little Ormsby isn't just like the rest of the lower school urchins, Benson. My folks live near his, and I've talked to the child in the holidays. He once met old Caterham, and they talked about running, and apparently the Speck was tremendously bucked to meet a fellow-creature who thought like himself there was no sport like it. He's a born runner, and ever since then he's dreamed of following in Caterham's footsteps. He's a wee sticker—you'll see."

" Only a minute more to wait," said Benson, his eyes on the school clock. " The Knockabout has turned out as usual, I see, to collect casualties."

Mr. Carbery, whose not entirely successful versatility had earned for him the cognomen of The Knockabout Man, was the junior science master at St. Mungo's, and was regarded as a well-meaning but frequently misguided " white man ". For a number of years he had turned out and run the trail for the Caterham Cup, just for amusement, he said, but really with the notion that some youngster might get himself into difficulties and be glad of counsel or a helping hand.

Handing over coats and caps to various non-starters, who found it easier to give advice than to run, the mob of competitors, of all sizes and ages from twelve to eighteen, lined up, shivering in the searching wind. Then Haydon-Dykes, the sports-master, read over the rules of the paper-chase, as laid down years before by the great Caterham, and, this done, spoke the final words of warning, and fired the pistol.

They were off at a wild scamper.

III

The pace at the start was of course far too hot for little Ormsby. He had expected nothing else, and ran along with the wide-scattered " tail " quite untroubled. He knew that at his own pace he could keep on going for ever. Something might possibly happen to all the big fellows who for the present were leaving him far behind, and if so he might ultimately pass them all. In any case, even if it were unlikely that he should win the Caterham Cup this year, or next, he meant to have it some time, and all running was good practice.

He was very happy as his shoes padded lightly on the muddy road. Lots of fellows were in front now whom he knew for certain he would presently leave behind; his second wind would not fail him; and, knowing Spider Hinchcliff, the hare, rather well, he surmised that the course would be an interesting one, over which brains as well as legs would count. The hares were allowed to make two breaks in the trail of fifty yards each. The Speck was sure

" They'll find my body in the first plough "

that the subtle Hinchcliff would make some very cunning use of those breaks.

A quarter of a mile beyond the village the trail left the road, crossed a high and prickly hedge, and took to green meadow, rather soggy from the rain, but nice going for all that. Already the Speck found himself drawing alongside a stout senior who had started with a desperate burst. It was that nice old thing Crabbe of Taylor's House.

"Peg along, Speck," he gasped, "tell them I died for Taylor's. They'll find my body in the first plough."

Ormsby grinned up at the heavily pounding Sixth former and passed him without mercy. But Crabbe and others likewise plump and short of breath were, on the whole, pleasantly surprised by the nature of the first two miles of the trail. They blessed Hinchcliff and Jiggy Weston for their considerate choice of country—nearly all meadow-land, with only a couple of turnip-fields, a stubble, and a short stretch of plough.

The Speck smiled to himself. Certainly this part was the worst kind of country for him—his light weight profited him most when it came to plough—but he noticed the direction in which the hares were heading. Their line led towards the river, and along the river, the Speck reminded himself, there were some very curious and baffling natural features of various kinds.

And then, just beyond a deep, miry lane, the trail changed its character and many a brave runner dropped into a walk. Diagonally across an enormous sticky plough lay the paper, and beyond that plough stretched another, curving gently downhill.

"That ass Hinchcliff!" panted Macdona of the Fourth, as little Ormsby drew abreast. "Couldn't he give us a stretch of road on a filthy day like this?"

"This is fine, Macdona!" piped the rosy-faced Speck, skipping airily from furrow to furrow as the defeated one afterwards put it. No wonder the youngster was pleased. One after another the mud-spattered, toiling figures in front were "coming back to him", and, better even than that, the trail was leading straight for a stretch of rugged country along the river, which, thought the Speck, very few knew as he knew it.

For the Speck was one of those people who are born with the mind of the explorer. Keen enough on games, he was not content with the boundaries of the playing-field as his school horizon, and on various half-holidays he had investigated the countryside to some purpose, as you shall learn.

"Hullo, Speck!" Why, this was Livingstone, also of Russel's. "I'm just about done."

"Oh, try to keep going, Livingstone. An awful lot of our men are tailing off."

Livingstone groaned. His feet were encased in masses of ponderous clay. "Once we're off this ghastly plough—but Macrae and Merridew and Wayne are leagues ahead."

The Speck frowned as he plodded on. Russel's had relied on Livingstone to get at least a place. The outlook was gloomy for the House. But all a man could do was to peg away, and so the Speck pegged away.

Leaving the punishing plough land at last, the trail dipped into a marshy hollow, crossed a wire fence, and plunged into the trees that lined the steep, well-nigh precipitous banks of the river. The Speck had already collected scraps of red paper and of green; by this wire fence lay a little heap of blue. That meant there was only the yellow to look out for—the chase must be working towards its end.

Trotting along on the carpet of pine needles beneath the dark trees, young Ormsby suddenly came in sight of quite a number of fellows, who were hunting

around exactly like hounds trying to pick up a scent.

"One of the breaks," thought the Speck. "Good old Spider Hinchcliff!"

Thanks, you see, to the hares' cunning, Ormsby was now once more on even terms with the great men of the Sixth.

"Why, Ormsby, you here already!" This was Mr. Carbery, the Knockabout. "We can't pick up the trail anywhere."

"What about the river?" suggested the Speck.

"Pining for that swim, Speck?" Merridew, mired and eager, had come up. "No, they can't have included the river in their break. The trail disappears here, and the river bank's still a good eighty yards away."

"Even friend Weston wouldn't misjudge so widely," said Mr. Carbery, perplexed. "Here's Benson. Well, Benson, any signs?"

"Not a scrap, sir." Benson was ruffled. "They haven't used all the paper, because the yellow hasn't been put down. They've made some silly bloomer over it. Don't you think we'd better just make a race of it from here, as if we'd caught the hares?"

"The rules don't provide for such a contingency, Benson."

"No, sir, but look what's happening—here's the tail of the pack up on us already."

The Speck knew Benson meant him, but, as became his size and unimportance, said nothing. Merridew spoke instead.

"I rather agree with Benson, sir. It seems the only thing to do."

"You think so, Merridew?" Merridew was one of those fellows whose opinions count with a sound master. "Then I'll blow the rally."

A long blast on the whistle collected the muddy, baffled pack. Mr. Carbery explained that in the circumstances—as apparently by some mistake a break far longer than fifty yards had been made in the trail—the pack were to make a start from where they were and make a race home of it.

Nobody was sorry except the Speck. He would have liked to linger and nose out that trail—the Spider, he knew, wasn't the fellow to make a silly bungle over laying the trail for a paper-chase.

But there was no help for it. He sped along after the big fellows as hard as he could go, in a bee-line for the school.

IV

That run home was just what the Speck loved. His wind was perfect, his legs were not tired, he was just warm enough to find the bitter wind bracing and delightful, and though the big fellows left him behind it was not by very much.

A considerable concourse was collected around the Big Gate as he padded through, red, muddy, and happy. He looked about to see the hares, but they were not to be seen. There was an unusually blank look on the faces of most of the fellows, and he noticed that the runners who had reached home before him were lingering about and talking instead of making off to their respective Houses for a bath.

Then the Speck saw one of his cronies, Bishop minor.

"Hullo, Bishop," said he, "who came in first?"

Bishop was full of some sensation. His squeaky voice was squeakier than usual with excitement.

"Jolly queer thing!" was his introduction. "Benson's first—Merridew just behind him—my, what a finish! But the funny thing is that they never caught the hares, and the hares aren't in yet!"

Master Bishop had summed up the situation with masterly completeness. Everyone was puzzled, including far wiser people than Bishop minor. Benson and Merridew were both puzzled and angry; the Knockabout,

who had arrived, by the by, on the heels of that flying couple—was puzzled. Even the Head was puzzled.

In little weary bunches, in breathless couples, and singly, the tail of the run was coming in, the perplexed assembly by Big Gate steadily increasing. Each new arrival, having learned the truth, contributed his share to the grand total of bewilderment, but Ormsby, the Speck, stood apart with Bishop minor thinking, with one eyebrow up and one down, which was the way that mental effort affected his exterior. To Bishop minor's aimless chatter he paid no attention whatever. His eyes were searching the crowd, but ceased searching when they fell upon Mr. Carbery, who was talking earnestly to Merridew.

"See you later, Bishop," said the Speck curtly, and with determination he trotted over and stood at attention by Mr. Carbery's elbow.

"There you are, Ormsby!" remarked that miry man, noticing him presently. "Well run!"

"Please, sir," said the Speck.

"What is it, Ormsby?"

"I believe—I think—I am——"

"In fact, *cogito, ergo sum*—but get on with it. He who hesitates, Ormsby, you know the rest."

"I've an idea of what may have happened to the hares."

"The dickens you have. Hear this, Merridew?"

"Sounds interesting," said Merridew. "Let's hear the idea, Speck."

"I don't want anyone else to know—yet"—Speck lowered his voice—"would you mind, Merridew, coming up towards Russel's House with me?"

"May I be of the conspiracy, Ormsby?" Mr. Carbery knew that the small boy wanted him too, but had not liked to put it direct.

"Thank you, sir. May we jog along, please—it's in a hurry, sort of."

As they jogged across to Russel's House, Ormsby explained his idea. Whatever it was, it drew laughter from his companions, and a promise to accompany him back over the fields to the point by the river at which the sprint home had started.

Reaching the gate of Russel's the master and the Sixth former waited, while the Speck rushed indoors and upstairs to his dormitory. On his return, still running hard, they smiled, observing a curious alteration in the slim figure of Master Ormsby. A curious bulge had formed about his waistline.

"What on earth have you tucked in there, Speck?" asked Merridew, as they jogged off again.

"Just my electric torch and a hank of string, Merridew. I don't want everyone to see them and come running after us."

"Capital, Speck—absolutely tophole!"

"You say you know this place you speak of, Ormsby?" asked the Knockabout, who looked rather worried as he swung along.

"Oh, yes, sir, quite well. Only me and Hinchcliff—and Hinchcliff doesn't know I know it."

"I see. An awkward position, Merridew?"

"Of course it is—but rather funny too! I think we must let the Speck—let Ormsby—go in first, sir."

"As far as I can gather we shall jolly well have to. But, upon my word, I've no more wind to spare for talking. Let's get there."

In due time they got there—to the spot where the trail had—apparently—stopped.

It came to an end abruptly—its termination marked by a carefully laid little pile of paper which indicated one of the permitted breaks—amongst some thick masses of ancient ivy growing about the rocks and trees on the steep river bank.

Ormsby came in sight of quite a number of fellows

"Now, Ormsby, the trail must recommence within fifty yards."

"Yes, sir."

Ormsby didn't linger, but led the way where the ivy, growing very densely, hid some rocks perhaps thirty yards farther on —and, amongst those rocks, the black mouth of a narrow cave!

"Will you hold the end of this, please, Merridew," said the Speck, drawing a coil of string and an electric torch from inside his running vest, "and let it run out after me in case I can't find my way back."

Merridew held it, and young Ormsby, having fastened the loose end of the coil round his arm, wormed his way into the damp, unpleasant-looking burrow.

Mr. Carbery and Merridew exchanged glances as the little boy's muddy feet disappeared, the former with a rather anxious frown, the latter with a grin.

"I've a great notion of young Ormsby, sir," said the Sixth former; "he's an uncommon sort of kid."

"I had no idea—" returned the master, stooping down to peer into the burrow. "What beastly places boys are fond of—but, of course, I was just the same."

The string ran out spasmodically and slowly, but without ceasing, until, by Merridew's computation, the hank was diminished by fully thirty yards. Then the movement ceased, and for minutes that seemed like hours nothing whatever happened. It seemed impossible to believe that the end of that hank of string was attached to a nice little golden-haired boy thirty yards underground. Mr. Carbery, worried, shouted once or twice, but only a stifled echo responded.

"I expect it's all right," Merridew assured him, "but if nothing happens soon I'll go in after the ferret."

"The cave seems to slope down very gradually," said the Knockabout, peering, "and I think enlarges. It seems to me it will be my duty—hullo! yes, I saw a flash —Ormsby's torch, perhaps. Yes—again! I see him, Merridew! Pull in the slack!"

In another moment there emerged from the mouth of the burrow Master Ormsby, but how changed, how unrecognizable—save by his blue eyes—an Ormsby! Mire covered him, even his golden hair was plastered, and his clothes, dripping with water, clung miserably to his shape. But the smile upon his countenance, as he dragged himself into daylight and stood up, was a grin of untarnished triumph.

"Here are the hares," he said, speaking simply as heroes should, and out of the earth crawled, yet mirier than he, the long-lost Jiggy Weston and Spider Hinchcliff. No smile, save a sickly one eloquent of embarrassment, stirred the mud upon their faces, and they shivered woefully as they faced the astounded Mr. Carbery.

"What on earth—or rather under the earth?—but we'll make for home—you'll catch your deaths. Come on, all of you—we'll hear the story later."

"Please, sir, before we go"—Ormsby's voice was almost plaintive, and he was fumbling inside his jersey again. "You might please witness that I've caught the hares and brought in all the coloured papers."

He held up a sodden bunch of coloured papers. It contained the requisite assortment—red, green, blue, and yellow. "I got the yellow in the cave," went on the dripping Ormsby, "so that completes the lot—and I made up on the hares first."

Merridew's gay laughter chased an old blackbird out of the ivy with a burst of startled and indignant noise.

"Seems to me the famous pot is yours," he said; "but Mr. Carbery's right—let's get off home and discuss it afterwards."

"Right, Merridew," chimed in the im-

"Here are the hares"

patient pedagogue, "cut along, boys!"

Jogging across the fields towards the school, Hinchcliff, in gasps, enlightened the perplexed Knockabout and the delighted Merridew regarding the afternoon's performance.

"I knew I could crawl through that cave right to the river side. It's about fifty yards long, but I've done it. We made a break in the trail thirty yards back from its mouth—and began to lay the paper again ten yards or so inside the cave. Nothing in the rules against that?"

"Nothing!" laughed the Sixth former.

"The spirit of the whole thing, Hinchcliff," said the master.

"Well, anyhow, we meant to lay it right through the cave and then cross the river, leaving a big patch on the far bank where it couldn't be missed."

"And while we lay jammed in your filthy burrow you two would have toddled home at ease?"

"Yes, Merridew. Only I lost the way in the cave. The beastly place was flooded. There are lots of branches, and we got on to a rock that seemed surrounded by water. Oh, my aunt, the darkness!"

"How long did you mean to wait? Nobody could possibly have heard your plaintive cries."

"I thought we should be missed—somebody was sure to know about the cave And we meant to keep on trying to find the way out."

"You'd be glad to see Ormsby's torch?"

"Oh, my, Merridew—he gave us the fright of our lives! He swam suddenly into sight with his torch in his teeth! The sudden light on the water in that gruesome hole looked awful!"

"*What? Swam?* What's this, Speck?"

"The cave had partly filled up with water," said the hero; "that's why they had gone off the right way. I guessed that's what had happened, 'cause I once saw the cave like that before."

"Extraordinary!" exclaimed the Knockabout.

"And the first thing Ormsby said, sir," —Jiggy Weston had found his tongue at last—"was 'Give me a handful of yellow paper, and I'll show you the way out'."

"We couldn't find the way we'd come, and had to follow him through that beastly pool. I'll never go into a bally cave again as long as I live!" The wretched and crestfallen Hinchcliff felt a real resentment towards caves—he foresaw that this particular specimen was going to cause him considerable unpopularity.

It did. While to his fellow-hare the worst that anybody said was, "You might have had more sense than to follow that lunatic Hinchcliff", upon Hinchcliff himself they expended in full measure the fury of thwarted sportsmen. "Pity you didn't stay there!" was the obvious comment with which to meet the miserable strategist's explanations.

But what was to be done about the Caterham Cup? The committee met and discussed it earnestly. According to all the written rules, young Ormsby had won it, and yet——. They sent for Ormsby.

Now young Ormsby was a sportsman, but he did cherish a certain irritation against one member of the committee—Benson, and so, instead of letting the committee know that he regarded the business as a joke, he let them wrestle with the problem. Benson's view was that Ormsby's claim to the Cup was not worth considering. He himself, a member of the Head's House, had reached Big Gate first—well then, what about it?

But Merridew carried his motion that they should have the Speck up and put the case to him.

Benson spoke first, using the big drum. He patronized the Speck, but pointed out that the Caterham Cup couldn't be won by a little boy who happened to be given to crawling about in caves.

The Speck's eyebrows changed levels as a symptom of mental tension. He answered Benson by quoting, word for word, the rules laid down by the great Caterham himself.

Merridew got his word in next, watching young Ormsby expectantly.

"All right then, Ormsby—your name goes on the Cup, and Russel's House has it for the year. That satisfy you?"

"No, Merridew!"

Benson grunted angrily: "What's the kid after?"

"I don't want my name on the Cup this year—but it should go to Russel's all the same."

Merridew slapped the table. "Gentlemen,"—he included the whole committee—"isn't he right?"

And that's how it was decided.

. . . . . .

Every time, during the ensuing year, that the Speck looked at the big silver cup standing in the dining-room at Russel's House he smiled, inwardly if not outwardly. Probably his inward eye already saw on its polished surface a name which three years later was engraved thereon for all the world to see:

"Marcus David Ormsby".

"Treasure Island"

By Will H. Ogilvie

Dusk has darkened his eager face,
  Hiding the book between his hands;
Treasure is there on a map to trace,
  Tides are booming on magic sands.
Double guineas and pieces of eight
  Strew the path to his peaks of dream;
Tarry of pigtail, Arrow the mate
  Cons his ship through the firelight gleam.

Tapping crutch on the "Benbow" door;
  Jingle and tramp of King George's men;
Pirate lugger that lies off-shore;
  Buccaneers in a Bristol Den;
Towering schooner with sunlit sails;
  Island surf where the rollers fall—
Tusitala, teller of tales,
  Out of the dusk you have charmed it all!

What though our treasure has long been spent,
  This was the hour that held us thralled.
Have we forgotten the way we went?
  Have we forgotten the stars that called?
Cheer him out on the golden trek!
  Up with the flag we have long hauled down!
One more hand for your crowded deck,
  Hispaniola from Bristol Town!

Aboard the *Hispaniola*

A Trip through the Sunderbunds

By Arthur W. Strachan

The Sunderbunds is the name given to the low-lying tract of land, intersected by innumerable channels, which is marked on the maps of India as the delta of the Brahmapootra, the Ganges, and Hooghly Rivers. If you can picture to yourselves a gigantic spider's web covering an area of about 250 square miles, you will be able to form a fair idea of what this extraordinary network of waterways is like. Some of its channels are broad and deep, opening out into lake-like expanses here and there; others are mere ditches.

Covered with dense and impenetrable jungle this malarious and practically uninhabited region is the haunt of a great variety of animals, a few of which are peculiar to the locality. Tigers, which are notorious man-eaters when they get the chance, literally swarm and dispute possession of the islands with the ponderous Indian rhinoceros, while buffalo, deer of many kinds, pig, and a host of other game make this portion of our Indian Empire one of the most interesting from the point of view of the naturalist or the sportsman. Reptiles too are well represented by huge pythons and many smaller but more deadly snakes, while the channels are infested with " muggers " or crocodiles, who share the evil reputation of the tigers as regards their taste for human flesh.

All this portion of the continent has been surveyed and the navigable channels charted and marked by a Mr. Sunder, after whom the district is named. It is owing to his work that it is possible to travel from Calcutta up either the Brahmapootra or the Ganges in the comfortable steamers of the River Steam Navigation Company, which, I may mention, are in charge of native *serangs* or captains.

The first time I made this fascinating trip I was the only European passenger, which was rather a disappointment from a social point of view, but I discovered later that it was a distinct advantage from a sporting one, as I got the serang to do things for me that he wouldn't have done had there been a number of other passengers on board.

There was little cargo to delay us, and we were soon steaming rapidly down the turbid waters of the Brahmapootra.

One of the first things to attract the attention of the traveller on this treacherous river is the extraordinary friability of its banks. The wash of the steamer detaches huge masses of the alluvial soil, which is carried down by the swift-flowing current to be deposited by the action of the tides on the low-lying islands in the delta.

On either side stretches the flat alluvial plain of the Assam Valley, clothed with the high, coarse grass so typical of this part of the world. On the north bank occasional

glimpses are to be obtained of the snow-clad peaks of the Himalayas, appearing like a bank of white cumulus clouds showing faintly above the haze of immense distance. To the south, nothing can be seen beyond the high bank, clothed with its impenetrable grass jungle, but the cloudless sky of the Indian cold weather. Tunnels through this grass, made by the four-footed inhabitants, are to be seen here and there.

Though the long grass at this part of our journey successfully conceals the inmates, the river itself is not altogether devoid of objects of interest. If you stand up in the bows of the steamer and listen carefully, before long you will hear a sound like a profound sigh, and with luck you may catch a fleeting glimpse of the creature that utters it. Just ahead, a sharp beak-like snout appears above the surface of the water, followed immediately by the round, smooth back and triangular dorsal fin of the Gangetic dolphin, as it rolls lazily over to breathe.

As the steamer rounds a bend, a sand-bank appears some distance in front, covered apparently with a shapeless mass of driftwood, with a few scattered logs lying round about. As we approach, one of these separate logs appears to be moving slowly towards the water's edge. Studied through a pair of good binoculars, the log resolves itself into a large crocodile crawling in leisurely fashion towards the water, while the supposed mass of driftwood turns out to be a number of its scaly companions of all sizes, huddled together as is the habit of these reptiles. They are rather different about the head from the crocodile usually represented in picture-books. Each is furnished with a long, sharp nose on the very end of which is a large and healthy-looking wart, and the bigger the crocodile the larger and more pronounced the growth on its snout. The long, narrow jaws, terminating with this apparently useless blob, proclaim the creatures to belong to the gharial, or fish-eating species, which is said to be harmless to man.

One by one, the company on the sand-bank scuttle to the water, and all disappear except one, which remains partially submerged, as though guarding the retreat of its companions, till the wash of the steamer reaches it, when it too sinks out of sight.

Occasionally an otter is disturbed and promptly dives, rarely giving us a second opportunity of admiring its graceful movements in the water.

Kingfishers flash past now and again, their plumage of red, peacock blue, and emerald green blazing in the sun like living sapphire. Flocks of screeching green parrots with plum-coloured heads pass high overhead on their way to or from their feeding-grounds, while occasionally duck and teal of various kinds arouse the covetous instincts of the sportsman as they pass in V formation up or down the river.

With objects of interest such as these continually before our eyes the journey to the next station, Gauhatti, soon passes.

From here to the next station, Goalpara, the scenery is of a more interesting character, as the grass jungle disappears, giving place to bamboos and forest trees. Glimpses of bird and animal life are now more frequent and varied.

A troup of the common Indian bonnet monkey (members of whose family are frequently seen accompanying organ-grinders in this country) stop their playful gambols among the branches of a large wild fig tree to grunt defiance at us as we pass, and the mellow whistle of the green fruit pigeon can be distinctly heard, though the birds themselves are quite invisible owing to their protective colouring.

The small variety of the plum-headed parakeet abounds. These may be called

the disturbers of the jungle peace, owing to their noisy squabbling and screeching.

A little farther down the river, the whistling sound of beating wings overhead makes us look up in time to see three unwieldy-looking black-and-white birds, with enormous misshapen beaks, fly across from one side to the other. From the shape of their bills they are easily identified as the rhinoceros-bird, or giant hornbill, and, as these curious birds are nowhere plentiful in Assam, we are lucky to get even just a glimpse of them.

After passing Goalpara the river again flows through alluvial plains, similar to the country above Gauhatti. Your imagination will enable you to jump from here to Goalundo (a small matter of 200 odd miles), as by doing so you can escape the more monotonous part of the journey.

In these upper reaches the river is subject to dense fogs at night during the cold weather, and even the powerful searchlights which are carried by the steamers fail to pierce the bewildering blanket, so most of the navigation of this portion has to be done during the day.

On the afternoon of the third day Goalundo is reached, and it is here that the Ganges joins forces with the Brahmapootra.

While the steamer was loading and unloading cargo here I once saw a rather interesting sight. A white-tailed or fishing eagle suddenly swooped and buried its powerful talons in a fish, which had been incautious enough to come too near the surface, but the victim was too heavy for the bird to lift, and a great struggle ensued. The fish fought gamely at first, and it was only by a tremendous flapping of its powerful wings that the eagle saved itself from being dragged under the water. Its cruel claws, however, had inflicted a terrible wound, and the struggles of its prey soon became feeble. When life was apparently extinct, the fish was dragged laboriously towards the bank, where the eagle arrived in a bedraggled and evidently exhausted condition, only to be denied the fruits of victory. A native, who had also been an interested spectator of the combat, waited till the fish was landed, then ran down the bank, drove the bird away, and marched off triumphantly with his ill-gotten gains.

Past Goalundo the scenery varies little till Barasal is reached, where the river becomes tidal and begins to split up into the channels which form the delta.

We have now entered the Sunderbunds proper, and the scenery changes completely. Sandbanks disappear, and greasy, slimy mud is the characteristic feature. The gharial is no longer to be seen, but huge man-eating crocodiles or muggers, as they are called in India, slither off the slimy banks and disappear with a sullen splash when disturbed. These sinister-looking monsters have a reputation as ugly as their features, and I never lost an opportunity of putting a bullet into one of them when I got the chance. In the neighbourhood of a village they sometimes become a terrible scourge, haunting the vicinity of the bathing-pool. Often silver or copper bangles are found inside these hideous brutes, telling a tragic tale.

Here and there the channel is so narrow that the jungle almost brushes the sides of the steamer on either bank. Occasionally we have to anchor till the tide rises sufficiently to allow us to get through some of these shallow, canal-like passages.

During these enforced waits there is always plenty to be seen that is of interest. Thousands of curious little fish known as mud-skippers (a species of blenny) hop about on the mud, appearing to be equally at home on land and in the water, using their large pectoral fins as a means of locomotion when out of their native element.

Small coral-pink crabs are also very much in evidence, scuttling about with an air of "important business", but without any apparent object, sharing the festering mud-banks with their finny companions without the slightest friction. A large snake swims across the channel with its head well above water, creating consternation among the mud-skippers as it glides up the slimy bank and disappears in the undergrowth.

While we have been watching, we have scarcely noticed that the tide has been rising rapidly and we are soon again under way, the paddles stirring up the mud till the water has the appearance and almost the consistency of pea-soup.

Spotted deer are now frequently seen feeding on the river banks, and so accustomed are they to the passing of the steamers that they pay little heed beyond raising their heads to gaze at the strange monster invading their preserves. Occasionally a "sounder" (or family party) of wild pigs may be observed moving leisurely through an open glade, busily routing in the muddy soil for delicacies in the shape of tuberous roots, while the ubiquitous monkey is always a source of pleasure and amusement in this fascinating land.

The great inducement to a sportsman to take this trip is the possibility of seeing one or more of the many man-eating tigers that infest this region, and I succeeded in ridding the district of two during the trip described. I saw a third which had been killed by natives under rather tragic circumstances, which I will describe to you later.

You may ask how these tigers can acquire a taste for human flesh if the Sunderbunds are practically uninhabited. In these jungles grows the "sal" tree, whose timber is in great demand for railway sleepers, and contractors send gangs of coolies in large native boats to fell and transport this timber to Calcutta. This gives the man-eater his opportunity, and the number of wooden crosses on the channel banks indicate that these jungle tragedies are not by any means infrequent.

The first of the two tigers accounted for I shot from the deck of the steamer without risk to myself, so there was little credit attached to the incident.

We had just rounded a bend when I became aware of excited talking on the other side of the deck from that on which I was sitting, and an excited native rushed across to me gasping: "*Sher*, sahib, *sher*!" "Sher" in Hindustani means a lion, but as there are no lions in the Sunderbunds I was rather mystified. Grabbing my rifle, which I kept loaded in case of an opportunity such as this, I bolted after my informant, and I shall never forget the sight that met my eyes when I got to the other side of the deck. Lying on a bank of short grass close to the water's edge was a beautiful tiger, his tail gently beating the ground while he gazed fixedly at the steamer. The serang took the boat in fairly close and stopped the engines to enable me to take a steady aim, so I would have had little excuse if I had made a mess of it. At the report the tiger sprang high in the air and turned a somersault on landing; but, as the way on the steamer carried us round the next bend, I was prevented for the moment from seeing if the shot had proved fatal. The engine-room bell rang, and we were soon going back on our track stern first, to find the beast stretched apparently lifeless near the place we had seen him fall. In almost less time than it takes to tell, the bow of the boat was run into the bank, about a dozen excited natives jumped ashore, and, heedless of warning, ran towards the tiger. Luckily for them the beast was stone dead and would never be responsible for any more of those tell-tale wooden crosses. This tiger was beautifully

marked, thickly striped on a rich, tawny ground, and its skin now adorns a certain bungalow in Sylhet. The second one I got as I was coming up the river under very similar circumstances; but, though a bigger beast, it was not so beautifully marked.

The daring of the tigers of the Sunderbunds is proverbial in India, and an incident of this trip will give you an idea of their audacity when once they have acquired a taste for human flesh.

The Indian Government has commenced a scheme for the reclamation of some of the low-lying land of this region, and for the purpose has established stations, where embankments are being raised to prevent flooding during exceptionally high tides. Pumping-engines are used to get rid of the superfluous water.

At one of these stations we were signalled to stop, and there were signs of excitement among the crowd of native labourers standing round some hidden object on the bank. A gangway was soon lowered, and four men emerged from the group carrying a fifth wrapped in a blanket on a stretcher. Depositing him carefully on the lower deck, the stretcher-bearers returned to the bank, but came on board again immediately with eight others, carrying a large tiger suspended from a stout bamboo pole. On inquiry I found that the stretcher was occupied by the mangled but still breathing driver of the pumping-engine, who had actually been dragged off by this daring brute while the machinery was in motion. It paid for its temerity with its life, however, as the rest of the gang pluckily attacked it with a variety of weapons, and, judging from the appearance of the carcass, some at least must have been of a formidable kind. The skin was useless, as there was scarcely a square foot of it without a wound of some kind, but the carcass was being taken to Calcutta for the sake of claiming the Government reward.

The unfortunate victim was being taken to hospital, but I heard afterwards that he died soon after admission.

No account of the Sunderbunds can be complete without a short description of the beauty of the scene at night, when the powerful searchlight carried on the steamer illuminates the trees lining the banks and accentuates the gloom and mystery of the jungle behind.

The muddy waters, under the influence of the magic rays, become a deep ultramarine blue, softened by a thin veil of delicate mauve, caused by the vapour rising from it in little curling wisps into the colder atmosphere. The wet, slimy banks appear as if covered with snow, and every leaf on the trees and bamboos that comes within its rays is shown clear and distinct against the deep violet background of the forest behind. The myriads of insects crossing the track of light are transformed for the moment into glittering iridescent gems, while occasional glimpses of the ghostly form of a large fruit bat (or flying fox), flying on noiseless wings, add to the feeling of unreality. Deer and other animals, apparently dazed by the blinding glare, are to be seen standing motionless at the jungle edge as if carved in stone; or perhaps a pair of green eyes can be observed staring from the gloom, a menace of lurking death.

Far ahead, a small white object becomes discernible and gradually resolves itself into one of those posts, silently pointing the way, upon which the navigator depends to guide his vessel safely through this wonderland.

Thus we journey on, threading our way through this vast labyrinth, till on the fifth day we emerge into the busy Hooghly, with its multitude of ships of every sort, size, and nationality.

The "Shuttle" and the Lawbreakers

By E. E. Cowper

" I call this peace," said Tom Corbett, as he blew a cloud of cigarette smoke upwards and gazed at its dispersal with half-shut eyes.

The Kid muttered words under his breath, the while his deft fingers varnished a miniature block destined for use on the latest model yacht.

" What's that?" asked Tom.

" I said," the Kid spoke aloud this time, " I said, why say peace, when there will be no peace shortly, double quick shortly, if you can interpret that wind scream—hark!"

" I'm sorry to say, John Keverne, that the truth is not in you. You didn't say half that."

" No," allowed the Kid, shameless, " but I thought it."

Corbett turned his head on the comfortable back of the very well padded easy chair in which he rested, and looked at his friend Wyndham Keverne, lord of the Manor of Polkeverne though still in his " teens ", elder brother and only near relation of the industrious Kid.

" What's he talking about, Polly? Are we really going to have a blow?"

" Blow! Shouldn't be surprised. Christmas comes but once a year, when it comes —on this coast it usually brings a beastly blow."

Keverne was busy. He was, in fact, absorbed, drawing plans for a new cottage he proposed to build on an eligible corner of the compact estate left to him by his late father, with the added charge of John.

His long brown fingers, as he worked, were as expressive as his long brown face and high marked features, black eyebrows raised with a deprecating expression, and his particularly pleasant voice.

" What do you expect in Blatchworthy, anyway?" he concluded, as he ruled a careful line.

" Sailing," said Tom. " You haven't laid up the *Shuttle*, have you?" His voice rose in anxiety.

" Do I ever lay up the cutter, except to scrape her, my dear man? She's as fit as a fiddle. Got her new wire stays, too. She costs me a fortune keeping her up to the mark."

Corbett grunted. Then he sighed in content.

" The *Shuttle* is the only female I ever loved," he said; " far away in the hum of cities I think about her."

" Interesting to know you ever think," commented the other, squinting along his drawing-board.

Even as he put the board down he sat up with a rather cautious movement, as though listening.

The Kid followed suit, his eyes fixing suddenly on the window, or rather on the heavy curtains pulled across it.

Corbett, seeing these indications of interest, pulled himself upright with a burst of creakings from the leather chair, knocked out his ash over the grate, and asked what was the matter.

"We shall know when you stop plunging about like a cart-horse," said Keverne.

"I heard it before," the Kid answered his brother's eyes. "It's not the ivy, because that's cut close."

No one spoke after that for several seconds. The insistent noises were the wind in the wide chimney, and the dull roar of waves far below on the reef called the Devil's Razor.

Against the background of noise there struck a different one, clear and intimate, a hurried tap-tap-tap on the window behind the curtain.

"It's louder than the first time," said the Kid.

Now, I suppose the average person would have gone to the window, drawn aside the curtain, and looked for the summoner. That was what Tom Corbett wanted to do at once—he being a first-rate specimen of the average person. His intention was checked by a peremptory gesture from Keverne, who always took his own line, the unexpected. In this case it was to reach the door in two long silent steps, and disappear.

"What's Polly up to?" asked Tom of the Kid, who did not move.

"Going out by the side-door. Catch him in the rear, probably."

"*Him!* Who is it, do you think?"

"Oh, anybody! Perhaps it's a lark. Shouldn't think so though; people don't lark in that sort of way with Polly. You see, he objects to being disturbed."

So said the Kid, still tenderly varnishing blocks about the size of a young pea. For two or three minutes at the outside there was silence. Then the quick ears of young John caught the sound of a distant door shutting, and he made a sign to Corbett. After that came an odd weak noise, like a lame step dragging. Lastly the door opened to admit Keverne and an object that might have been a Guy Fawkes dummy, but no doubt called itself a man.

"Better come to the fire," said the master of the house, "sit on that chair there. Are you hungry?"

"Am I? S'welp me, guv'nor, I haven't 'ad a crust since last night when I got a bit outen a pig bucket." So said the object, in a fretful whine.

"That so?" Keverne stood with his back to the fire, observing this Guy Fawkes from head to foot. "Kid, go and get some bread and meat, and don't make a row; the servants are in bed. Get a cocoa-tin and the kettle; we can boil it on this fire."

When the object presently ate what was brought, Tom Corbett, muttering "good", turned his gaze away. Polly said nothing at all, but his eyebrows were raised as if he would say:

"Well—what would you expect, considering?"

A few words passed between the brothers, and the Kid went out again, to remain some time. When he came back the cocoa was finished and the scarecrow sat on the edge of his chair, shaking less.

Keverne, lounging against the heavy table, hands in pockets, now explained the situation.

"I can't put you in one of the bedrooms, because I don't want the servants to lie when they are asked about you—as they will be shortly—but I've got a workshop den in the garden passage. It's always locked, because of the chemicals—we can't have meddlers messing around and blowing us sky high, see? You'll be all right there, as long as you touch nothing—nothing whatever. There is a hot-water tap and a galvanized tub; you are to have a bath, and

"Better come to the fire"

you'll find clothes you are to put on. Clothes, boots, all of it. Everything you have on I shall put in the retort and destroy, see? You can sleep on the big couch, and you'll find any amount of rugs and all that, but you are not to show or make a sound; if you do you'll be caught."

"Gawd is my witness, guv'nor, I've never done nothing. If a man can't get work that don't lay up——"

The monkey-like eyes of the scarecrow wavered as they encountered Polly's polite stare.

"That so?" he said. "Well, we'll see in the morning. I've no earthly doubt they'll be round after you, and, if you've done nothing, you can come out and talk to them."

The scarecrow began to whimper. Tom Corbett looked from one to the other uneasily. It positively hurt him to see things suffer, and *this* was such a lost object, the very last word in friendless misery.

"Buck up, John Brand," said Polly, standing up and squaring his shoulders with a characteristic movement.

The scarecrow ceased whimpering and swallowed.

"That ain't——" he began and stopped, cautious of committing himself to a single word of truth.

"No, but it's going to be. From henceforth and forever you are John Brand. First name after my brother, who's a decent pattern. Second name because you are a brand from the burning. You seem to be

jolly well singed, but we'll see if there isn't some sound wood left in your composition. Now come on. Tom, open the window, will you."

It was about three in the morning when the conference broke up and went to bed yawning.

"My dear man," said Polly, "the law is at times distinctly unrighteous by all rules of the game. In this case, unluckily, it's standing four square, and *we* haven't a blamed leg to our name. You really couldn't have a worse rotter than John Brand. Positively not made. Creation refuses to contemplate it."

"But look here, Polly," began Tom desperately, his hair strangely disordered, not from horror, but from uneasy movements as his amazement increased.

"I decline to look. Before I leap anyway. Let's go to bed; I'm asleep. Kindly remember that to be at their best our brilliant brains must have rest."

Then, seeing Corbett was taking things seriously, more so than usual, he added:

"And you won't know John Brand in the morning. To-morrow you'll see no difference between him and John Keverne."

"Oh, I say," said the Kid with pain.

During breakfast next morning things began to happen. Polly said, after his interview with the constable:

"If we were writing a book at this crisis we should say 'the Plot Thickens'."

"Is he on the scent?" asked Corbett, ignoring generalities.

"Well, he's heard a rumour. It's a thing you do hear in villages. The poor beggar asked for some water at the lodge gate. Somebody declared he came up the drive. Of course I said the obvious, 'how could anyone see where he went at that hour on such a night?' Our friend made heavy notes of the clever remark."

"It was true, anyway," said Tom. "You couldn't see. But if he asked at the lodge, and old Mrs. Dodridge and her friends saw the chap come on up the drive—it might suggest——"

"It did, you see," allowed Keverne plaintively, "hence this official visit. I jolly well confused the trail though. Took the bobby by the button and pointed out one thousand excellent reasons why he couldn't possibly have come here. He made notes of it all."

"Mrs. Dodridge would be just as blind, deaf, and dumb as old Dods," said the Kid cheerfully. "It wouldn't be her fault that anything came out."

"It was not. I told Dods this morning not to let the maids interfere with the stink-shop just now, as there might be an explosion. I said I was trying a new experiment. So I am, 'plucking a brand from the burning'; anyway, my words were borne out, and, so to speak, rubbed in by the vile stench that issued from the den when I burned his togs."

The Kid was placing slabs of ham between doorsteps of bread and butter.

"Look here, Polly," he said, "I'll give him my cup. We can't have four dirty ones; it's too blatant."

John Keverne had a practical mind.

"Will you take the grub in, then? Mind you don't talk. It's just as well not to blaze the trail."

"I shan't talk. Why should I? I only want to see how he looks in my clothes. After all, it's I who suffer loss," protested the Kid, "those trousers were awfully decent ones. I liked them."

This was all very pleasant and prosperous. But it was superficial. Presently the official machine would refuse to be put aside to chew one thousand good reasons why it need not inquire, and might come down to facts.

"You see," allowed Polly, as they strolled

round the wind-blown terraces from which the grey sea looked so untidy and ill-tempered just now, "you see, the poor devil has been in prison as a general practice, which is a nuisance when it comes to fresh mishaps. From our point of view he never had a chance, as he brought himself up on Thames' side and existed by stealing from any handy source in the ship line. It's rather a poor record."

Tom grunted. If there was a thing he loathed it was to think of those who never had a chance. He looked wooden because he was so full of sympathy.

"And this time," he suggested, "what about it?"

Keverne hesitated. It was unpleasant to admit how very far this brand had got in the fire.

"Well, Kipling said about some chap, that he was 'habitually economical of the truth'—this is a case of it—bound to be. But he allows he's been burning ricks—a farm between here and King's Clawton. He *says* he asked for something to eat, and the farmer shooed him off the place. He says, too, that he only wanted work and a bed in a barn."

"Doesn't strike one as a worker," said Tom.

"No, that's just it. Wouldn't strike any farmer in that light. Anyway, out of revenge he fired the man's ricks—and you know what the wind is. Then he came along here; said he'd heard I was decent to anyone down on his luck. Of course that's not cutting any ice with me; all the same he's a miserable animal—what chance have they!"

"I must say one thing," the Kid barged into the conversation, understanding from his brother's expression that a little cheer would help life along, "he's not the rat kind. I bar that. One seems bound to get one or the other when they're quite off the lines, the monkey kind and the rat kind. I say, Tom, do you remember the wreckers? Pedler was a rat—runaway chin and horrible teeth, long nose. Now, this poor devil's got a jaw, anyway. Polly, he looks jolly neat in my rags; do you know, he's an inch shorter than I am, nearly, and may be any age, twenty-five—anything, and I'm fifteen."

Keverne's gaze rested a moment on his young brother.

"Daresay," he allowed, "potato peelings and herrings' heads are not the sort of food that tend to make growth."

"The world's a jolly rotten place for some," said the Kid, shaking his head wisely.

"So say all of us," agreed Polly, looking away and away down into the spume-drenched cove where the cutter tugged at her moorings.

A day or two went by in outward peace, but inward expectation. The fugitive ate, slept, and, because he was young, began to fill out in a hopeful manner. He cringed after the manner of lost dogs, and watched Keverne with a furtive gaze from shifty eyes set near together and deep under a lumpy forehead. He certainly had a jaw, as the Kid observed, and a long line of a mouth, both ill-tempered and grim.

He was not allowed outside the stink-shop.

Then—after these hours of peace—came the ancient retainer to Keverne and said: "May I speak to you, sir?" It is usually a phrase of meaning in households, and in this case meant that Dods had seen someone lurking round the workshop and garden door after nightfall, and rumours were rife in Blatchworthy that Mr. Keverne was hiding from justice a miscreant of the worse kind.

"Any idea who was hanging about?" asked Polly.

"Well, sir, I might be mistaken, but he looked to me like Fitt—Elihu Fitt. You will recollect him over the wrecking case, sir." Old Dods raised a look of meaning—respectful meaning.

"Fitt! Of course I know, but isn't he in prison?"

"He's served his term, sir, and is back in the village for a bit. He might harbour a feeling of revenge, sir, if I may be allowed to suggest it." Dods gazed at the wall, still with respectful meaning.

"Dash!" muttered Polly.

"Just so, sir," agreed Dods with feeling.

For some hours Keverne considered the circumstances which were gradually hedging him in to an encounter with authority. Baffling the village constable may be easy, but answering pointed questions from the chief inspector at King's Clawton would be a very different thing. Besides, Polkeverne objected strongly to that sort of thing, and the "terminological inexactitudes" it entailed.

Hence his sudden announcement at the comfortable hour of tea.

"I say, Kid, we are going on board in about half an hour."

"Why on earth? I *must* say, Polly——"

"Don't babble. We three go on board for the obvious reason of inquiration into the *Shuttle's* condition. Tom and I go also, of course; we come away, and you stop on board."

John Keverne, sitting on the rug toasting a sausage on the toasting fork, shifted his position and sighed. He was used to being offered up at vital moments, and seldom complained; this time, however, it was unpleasant.

"She's pitching foully," he said.

"I know. It can't be helped. We go down at the witching hour when the village is in the Green Bough Bar. We leave you, come back and make a point of conversation with certain of the unbelievers who will be loafing around. They will see that we are two only. To-morrow morning in the light of day three of us will go down and board the *Shuttle*; we shall have provender and so on, and we shall say we are going to Barhaven, whereas, once outside, I'm going somewhere else with a view to planting out this incubus with a reasonable start."

"Oh, I knew you were going to do that," said the Kid. "*I* don't mind, Polly, only, look here, if you are going to march him down in the public eye you'd better drape a bed valance round his legs, because they are inclined to bowness and mine aren't."

"Why can't I sleep on board?" asked Corbett.

"Because the sizes don't fit," Keverne told him. "If we bustle, and wear oilskins, those chaps on the quay won't notice who's who. It's astonishing how people see what they expect to see. Even intelligent people; and, supposing there is a doubting Thomas about, we shall soon be out of reach."

"Dead. Drowned," said the Kid, and he ate the sausage with some bitterness.

All things came to pass as Polkeverne had arranged. Three went out into the driving scud of the thick evening. Two came back over the grey tossing water, and, because there was still no one about, went into the "Green Bough", and stood there talking for a minute or two. Keverne left an order that word was to be sent up at once if the cutter dragged.

"I don't think she will with three anchors down," he said; "we want to go out to-morrow."

No one was surprised, everybody being accustomed to the jaunts of Polkeverne and the *Shuttle*, but they suggested that the weather looked ugly—"coming up thick", they said.

In the morning, which fulfilled this prophecy amply, three went down to the quay

in oilskins, with sou'westers well tied on. They carried baskets and oil. They went off in haste, and the weather was so thick that they seemed to row into a haze like a Scots mist.

Up at the Manor house old Dodridge arranged unopened letters on the hall table, the official envelope from King's Clawton with the usual domestic budget. He was quite prepared to say—if and when Mr. Inspector arrived—that Mr. Polkeverne had gone off on the yacht and left the letters till his return. The "letter" of this would be true, if not the spirit. Dods would take the sin of that upon his soul for Polly, who had said, looking at the envelopes:

"I will leave these as they are, Dods. Don't want to know too much."

Likewise Dods reduced the stink-shop to its normal condition. No detail missed his piercing eye. Lastly, he snubbed the housemaid, who said it seemed to her that Mr. John's bed had not been properly slept in. It was very untidy, she admitted (Keverne had seen to that), but it didn't "seem to look natural", according to Emily. After hearing Mr. Dodridge's opinion of her brains and her tongue, however, she said no more.

Meanwhile the passengers in the dinghy had some difficulty in boarding the cutter without serious damage to paint. The Kid said he hadn't been sick, but that was luck, and no credit to Polly. He also said he'd kept the stove going all night to air the bunks, as mushrooms were growing in the beds. With quick eyes, and in a furtive manner, John Brand observed his namesake. At times it seemed that he laughed, but checked the inclination. He never spoke, unless to answer "yes" or "no", and appeared to know nothing about a vessel.

It was about ten o'clock on a falling tide when the *Shuttle* cast off her moorings and made her first tack out in the direction of Black Head. This was to support the tale that she was bound for Barhaven.

"Where are we for, really?" asked Tom, perched on the windward side of the counter by his friend who was steering.

Polly named a certain great shipping centre that had a channel to itself in name.

Tom gave a whistle, or would have if it had not been blown down his throat.

"But, my dear man, it's a hundred and fifty miles, isn't it?"

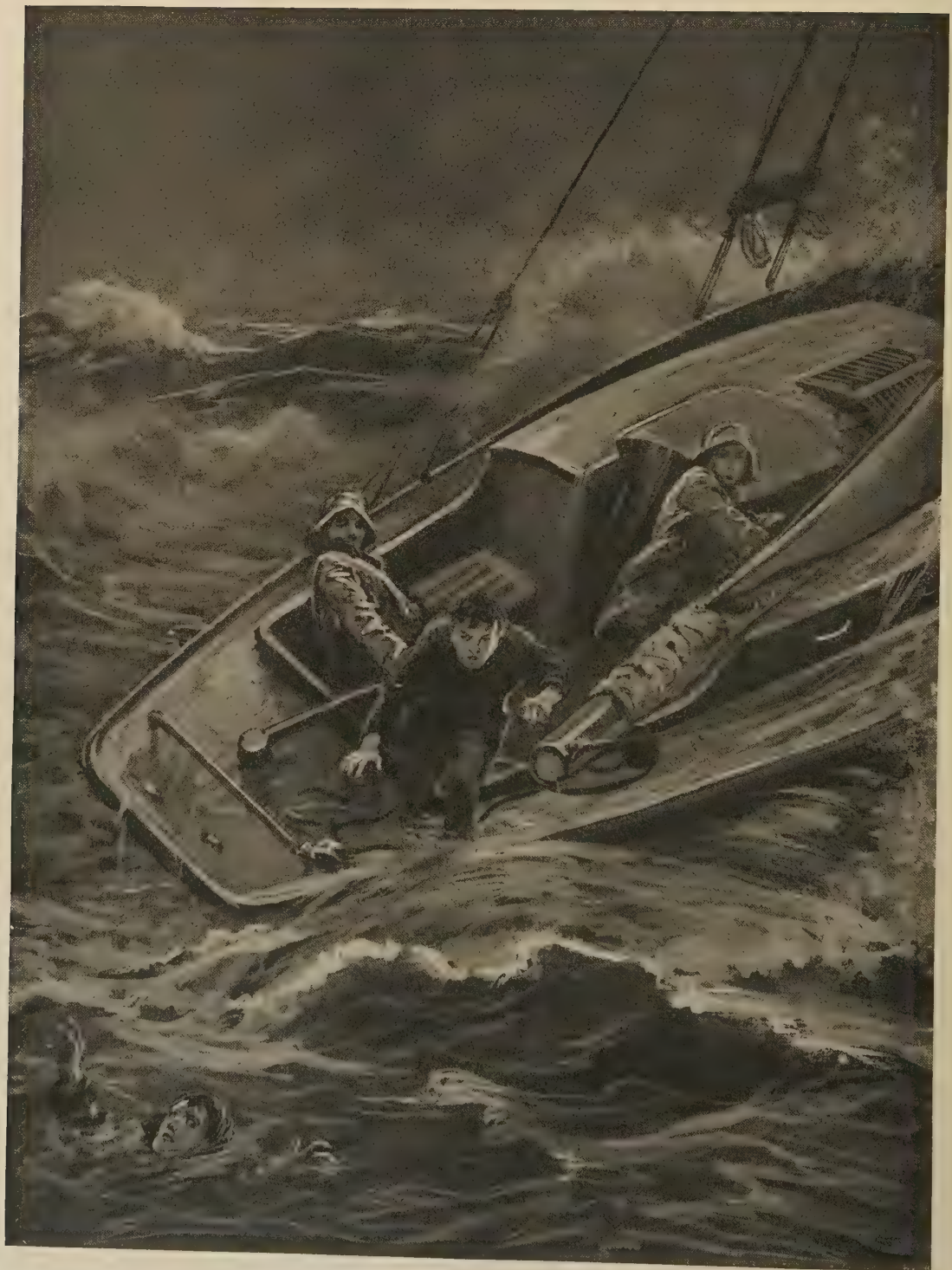
Polkeverne said it was not so much as that. The first twenty-five would be a beastly grind—tide against them, wind bang on shore, but once round the corner of the county, as it were, there would be tremendous driving force in a perfectly fair wind, and, of course, the tide.

"What's a hundred-mile run with such a wind?" said Polly.

Tom made no comment. He had never been on the *Shuttle* in less pleasant weather. He knew how stout she was, how splendidly built, how perfectly found. He knew she could be battened down by her watertight companion-hatch as well as the fore-hatch. He knew the depth of her well-coppered hull. All this he knew, and he had further a profound faith in the character of the *Shuttle*, but yet he was startled at the boldness of Polly's plan.

The ebbing of the strong tide carried them down and out by Barhaven Race, where the sea tossed the cutter like a cork, and the deck was drenched every moment by pitching seas that rose straight up and fell over the beam. No steering could evade them, because they flung themselves up and down in a sort of wild frenzy—it is the fashion of bad seas over races; a very vile fashion too!

Blatchworthy was long hidden. Even Black Head was veiled and indefinite. There was no sail in sight.



Keverne fell like a stone

"Now then, to get out," said Polly, "one or two shortish tacks, and then, ho, for a course to the north! I wish the elements hadn't taken the notion to empty all their worst inventions on us. Just look at it!"

Tom was looking, as well as he could for the rush of cold spray in his eyes. It was bad, but was going to be worse. Of that he was very sure.

For some two hours the cutter fought her way against the increasing strength of the wind. Keverne was trying all the time to make good on a northern course, but the ebb baffled him. She made "westing", but the tide carried her down, and the fuss kicked up by the rush of it across the wind was something to remember.

Then, about twelve, came the slack, and after that the gradually growing pace of the flood-tide, across the wind still, of course, but the other way and in favour of the direction of their intended course. Polly said they were far enough out not to worry about inshore dangers, so, alone in the smother of that chill scudding mist, seeing nothing but a limited world of rolling sea, they made for the Channel. There was a sense of relief in the minds of all three when the moment of the real start arrived. Futile discomfort and useless buffeting are disheartening, depressing even; as Keverne said, had it not been for probable visitors they would have left the moorings later. However, all seemed well. The passenger was not sick. He was being pressed into service by the Kid, who had no opinion of idleness, and less still of doing the work alone. The two elders were steering in shifts, taking turns to look after the head-sheets. The fore-hatch was battened down, as the bows were awash all the time; the companion-hatch slid along to a three-parts close; thus was the inside dry and just as stuffy, as the Kid pointedly described. But you had to keep the water out. In the well, Corbett loosened the fastenings of the life-belts that hung ready to hand. It was the sort of weather when those things presented themselves to the eye.

Heeled over, so that the lee scuppers were under water and the grey rush of it roared along the deck to be left behind in an angry white wake, raced the *Shuttle*. She was close-hauled, carrying storm jib, foresail, and mainsail with a couple of reefs down—of course no topsail. She was snug enough, and, as the afternoon hours passed, a sense of security came with custom. They were not towing the dinghy. She was riding on the moorings at Blatchworthy. Considering the weather, and the likelihood of her filling or being turned over, Polly had judged it better to go without her. When the end of the long run was reached they would surely find a boat willing to land them.

Once or twice in the course of hours they sighted a wind-blown battered vessel, either going their way or trying to make something with the wind against the flow. These ships were like wet shadows on a screen. They tore by, pitching and heaving, to be swallowed by the blinding spume. It was as though they were too much taken up with their own worries to notice the troubles of others. A wet man steered, water streaming from his oilskins; as a rule no one else was visible, for this grey smother of fog was cold as Christmas-time could make it.

At tea-time it was dark. The lights made green and ruby stains on the rollers, and all was set up for the night. Keverne proposed to carry on right through, his present difficulty being to see where they were. The guide he hoped for was the immensely powerful lighthouse at Death's Point. Once he sighted that, it would be a very few miles into the Channel and that dead run before the wind.

They heard the roar of the siren—amazing! Then realized the smear of the great light on the dark. Keverne was well pleased; they were not too close in, and, keeping as they were going, should be safe enough in half an hour. The tide was very strongly with them.

It must be understood that the *Shuttle* was a tiller-steered boat; she had no binnacle or wheel-house. She was just a thoroughly serviceable decked boat of eight or ten tons, built for coasting. This being so, her skipper was used to steering by sight, by the wind, by instinct, by knowledge, making use of the compass at times, but not habitually.

About this crisis, then, Polly demanded the compass, which was in a case and kept in the cabin. The Kid came up with it, and stayed to remark upon the extreme beastliness of conditions at that moment.

Tom put the compass on the counter and turned his torch on for the better consideration of it. For another fifteen or twenty minutes they ran on, then Polly decreed the falling off before the wind for the eastward run. He kept her away a little and a little, while Tom let out the mainsheet. The little jib was let out also—and the pace increased more and more with the swooping bounds that are so hard for a helmsman to hold.

"If we had the spinnaker up we *should* go," said the Kid to John Brand, who was outside now, taking stock of every detail from the height of the following waves

The storm had gone

to the foresail cleats, which were set aft for convenience of handling.

There was a breathless feeling about this change of motion; no one spoke till the Kid broke silence again by suggesting food; he said he would cut sandwiches for Polly.

The tide had turned against them by now, of course. The six hours of flow were done. Here was the ebb coming out in the eye of the wind and making a sea that looked as mischievous as it well could. A bad sea looks so much worse at night—the tearing clouds above, the glimpses of a mad moon which seems to take headlong pitches, the fearful deep of the shadows in the water, and the glare of the foam patches so horribly high.

After the sandwiches Polly suddenly announced that he must let out a reef.

"We haven't enough sail," he said, "the sea's rising; we might get pooped. Jib's too small, you see."

Now that was the beginning of the crisis and the end of peace of mind for a long space.

"You'll get her up in the wind, of course," said Tom, and proceeded to haul in the mainsheets.

Polly put the helm hard down, and the cutter rushed round like a submarine. There was a wild helter-skelter of slamming blocks and beating tackle, tall black rollers came at them out of the night, piling up behind each other and pouring down in broken water.

"Look alive, let the sail be! You take from the mast!" Keverne bawled this to Tom, as he sprang on the counter and began unknotting the reef with stiffened fingers. Corbett was on the deck in a moment, following the line of knots from the throat of the boom.

Now, it will be understood that the cutter was kicking like a mad horse, and the deck slippery with water. Add to that, wind, spray, a tugging boom, and bitter cold, and you see how easy catastrophe might be.

Tom Corbett heard a shrill yell, and saw Keverne fall off the counter like a stone. He fell as though he had been knocked on the head, which was just the fact, and the yell did not come from him, but from John Brand, who shed his oilskin in a breath and went over the stern after Polly. Not only did he go, but he gripped the nearest lifebelt and took it with him. He had not been noting details for nothing!

Corbett raced like a chamois along the deck, hauled the slogging boom in with a great wrench, and, coiling up the slack of the sheet, waited—looking, his heart thumping like a hammer. He was aware of the Kid close to him, but neither spoke. Wind and tide, one against the other, were holding the cutter. This was salvation. The Kid gave a hoarse cry as a black shape showed on the heave of a wave. Tom saw it, and threw the rope with good aim—it fell across the floating thing. He shouted, and an answering call came from the water.

"He's all right," gasped the Kid, and laughed chokingly to get the tightness out of his throat.

Then they pulled. Cautiously at first, more confidently as they found the bodies coming, till they could distinguish the situation. Keverne was like a log; the rescuer had crammed the belt over his head and was swimming. He had tied the rope round Polly too.

"Good *man*!" shouted Tom, "look out for the counter! Wait for a wave!"

Neither he nor the Kid could remember afterwards how it was done: the *Shuttle* leaped at a roller and her stern fell low, the water rushed by sweeping the scuppers and counter, Tom hauled with all his great strength, backed by the Kid—no mean

weight. The two were *crashed* aboard on the rush, and dragged in anyhow on a scramble—Keverne by the rope, the other, helping himself, was flung with force that pitched him against the edge of the counter. The Kid got hold of him, and the rest was easy after that climax of horror.

The cutter was left to her own sweet will; close-hauled she rode—with her tiller lashed, her reef knots irregular, her foresails crossed, and no one counted the minutes while they spun out into an hour and more.

Keverne was dragged out of his wet things and put into his bunk, but he remained unconscious, and the two "nurses" had small notion what to do beyond warmth—a bruised swelling was coming out above his temple.

"Much better outside than in," said the Kid seriously.

They left John Brand to see to him, after pitching him a bundle of dry flannels and forcing a mug of hot coffee down his throat. He said nothing and looked grey.

"He's cold," declared Tom. "That was a jolly decent thing to do. He can swim, eh?" This was by the way, as they worked over Polly with anxious hearts but great thankfulness.

"Let him alone," suggested the Kid, "now he's warm. Let him lie still. If his brains got shaken up it ought to do good to let them settle."

So they left Polly's brains to settle, and then found that John Brand had fainted. When they moved him he waked with a groan, muttering that he was all right.

"I've a strong impression his ribs got cracked or something of that sort," said Tom frowning. "He was banged down pretty hard."

They felt him cautiously.

"We shouldn't know if there were any loose bit about inside," the Kid suggested. "I vote we strap this long scarf round him and pin it. It might help."

This was done, and the victim was put into another bunk, where he lay staring across the cabin at Keverne's motionless body.

"And now," said Tom to the Kid, as they sat together by the stove reviving themselves with coffee and food, "what next? Not much use going *on* with that"—he jerked his head towards the berths—"what about it?"

"We'd better get back home," said the Kid without hesitation, "they can't do anything to that poor devil now. He's jolly well made good. Polly would pay anything for him."

In this mind they went up on deck and looked round. It was then they found the compass had gone. Lost overboard in the scramble, no doubt. It altered the situation completely. Corbett sat still, considering, and finally gave out his opinion *against* the homeward run.

"When it comes to distance," he reasoned, "it must be much the same either way. But I bar the run home from now, tacking against that wind, Kid—and no compass. We might go on till Kingdom Come or America—or turn south too soon and run on the Death's Head rocks. We've got no dinghy—if we do ground. Take it the other way—we've only got to run on slick before this wind till we get up against Kingshampton. The Channel will narrow to the river and be more sheltered—there'll be craft about, and we can get help."

"And, of course, there are hospitals," agreed the Kid. "Yes, let's run on for Kingshampton then. But, look here, Tom, why not lay-to as we *are* till this tide's run out, and start on with the flow about one o'clock in the morning. Do that."

It was agreed. They took it in turns to sleep and watch; and, because they were

exhausted more by strain than work, they forgot about time, and presently realized six o'clock instead of one. The whole tide had passed. Once again they were faced with the ebb.

They were rather dazed at this disaster, gazing over the grey waste with troubled eyes. Presently it was borne in upon them that there was a change. Though the atmosphere was still thick, the wind was less and steadier. The sea, still high, was less high.

The Kid opined that they would reach Kingshampton in about two jiffs. Tom was entirely confused. The only course that appeared to him was to run before this cold steady wind till they got somewhere.

This went on till afternoon with no event to break the monotony except the awakening of Polly. He came to life about midday, asked what was happening, was put off with a brief explanation, hot coffee, and a little food. He went to sleep—very foggy—but woke again almost his normal self about sunset.

He slid out of his bunk, went over and looked at the "brand", and grinned.

"Hullo, John!" he said.

"'Ullo, sir!" returned the other, and grinned also. The twinkle in his sunken eyes was very human.

Polly put on clothes, and went up to interview Tom, who was steering and looked the worse for wear, but received him with a silent ovation.

The first thing that he saw was a pale streak of lemon-coloured sky away down over miles of tumbled, tired-looking sea, over which sunlight fingers retreated to the horizon. The storm had gone; only confusion and weariness remained.

The *Shuttle* was pounding along in a persevering manner before this stiff cold wind. Away over the starboard beam a towering bluff rose above the grey water.

"What do you suppose that is?" asked Corbett. "Doesn't look like Kingshampton."

Keverne looked at the westering sun. He gazed and gazed at that growing headland, then he gripped his head with both hands and went off into spasms of gusty laughter. Tom looked at him uneasily.

"What is there to laugh at?" he asked.

Polly went off into renewed sobs and gurgles, hearing which the Kid came up and gazed also.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped the skipper, "it's so funny. It's so desperately *funny*! Don't you see! The old *Shuttle* has taken the bit between her teeth and come home! She knew we were all crocked up; also she knew we were evading the law, and not quite up to sample in the matter of behaviour, so she's brought the lot of us back to face the music and carry things through in a decent and respectable manner."

"That's the Bull's Nose," said the Kid, naming the northern horn of Blatchworthy Bay.

Then, of course, Tom saw also.

Given a strong ebb-tide just at the crucial moment, a small vessel lay-to drifting, a wind shifting to the north, also at the crucial moment, and an inexperienced steersman astray with anxiety, and you have the explanation.

However, Keverne always said it was really because the *Shuttle* permitted no smudge on the family escutcheon.

Either way he had only one course open. He faced the music, with a very strong case now. While the brand was mending his ribs in bed, Polly interviewed authority in several forms. Finally he paid the rick damage, assuaged justice, and kept this brand he had snatched from the burning.

"He's well worth it," said Polly.

The Captain and his Field

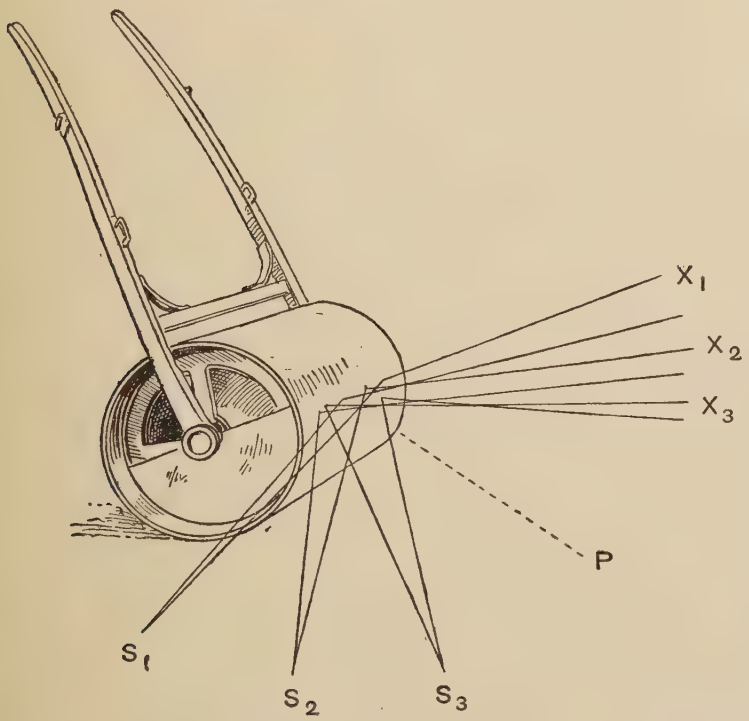
By "Stumper"

Though it is hoped that others will find useful hints in it, this article is mainly intended for the captains of those lesser schools that do not boast a "blue" as games-master or enjoy the services of a first-rate professional coach. Close observation shows that many such school teams fail to have the cricket success which the members' natural abilities should earn for them, chiefly through the lack of scientific training in fielding and the unguided or ill-guided inexperience of their captains. In spite of daily illustration, not only in club and school cricket, but too often, alas! in county and even test matches, it is extraordinarily difficult to impress upon the young cricketer—or the old one, for that matter—that bowling and batting are not the only departments of the game; that fielding is, indeed, even *more* important than either; that more matches are won by good fielding than by good batting and bowling. Most certainly is this true of all cricket below the best second-class.

Some years ago a cricketer of ability and wide experience attended during several seasons a large number of matches between minor schools and less important clubs with the definite purpose of compiling statistics, as far as possible, to prove how greatly success in match-winning depends on fielding. He classified teams as good, moderate, and bad fielding sides. Naturally the teams in each class, playing with others of the same class, came out in the order to which their bowling and fielding entitled them, but the moderate fielding sides lost more than seventy-five per cent of their matches with good fielding sides whose batting and bowling were often greatly inferior to their own; the third class were beaten time and again by teams to which on paper they seemed to be superior, in spite of their good work in the other departments. The really good fielding sides were consistently successful as match winners. Definite statistics of the actual results of dropped catches and boundaries given away were not so easily obtained. Allowance must be made for the moral effect, not only upon the individuals chiefly concerned but upon the whole side. Again, in one match a dropped catch may mean anything up to 200 runs, in another three such crimes may lose a side only 20 or 30. But a little thought soon brings home the value of sound fielding. If four or five catches are missed, the out side is playing eleven men against fifteen or sixteen—nay more, for some of the lucky ones will have played themselves in and lost their nervousness before receiving the "life", being thus several times as dangerous. If half a dozen "should-be" singles or twos are allowed to reach the boundary, some twenty runs have been handed out as a present to the batting side. One bad throw-in may make the difference of a wicket and four runs.

Let us illustrate by an actual example the difference made by good and bad fielding. In the beginning of May and the middle of July two or three seasons ago were played home and return matches between two

fairly important schools, which we may call A and B. A had plenty of good batting, some fair bowlers, and one exceptionally good boy bowler. They also had four or five very bad fieldsmen. B won the toss, and A's star bowler had a catch missed off him and bowled a man in his first over. Coming very quickly off the pitch he depended chiefly on catches for his wickets. He puzzled B's batsmen greatly, but in his first dozen overs he had two missed in the slips, one at the wicket, and one at cover, all likely chances. Mistakes also at third slip, cover, and short leg gave away 4, 3, and 4 respectively. An experienced bowler might well have lost his head, as our boy did. In the next four or five overs he put up some pretty wild stuff, and was carted to the tune of about 25 and taken off, having obtained one wicket for 40. B made 177; A, a dispirited side, were dismissed for 83. One with influence "went for" A's skipper. Several of the worst fieldsmen were summarily ejected from the side; regular fielding practice on a systematic plan was instituted; each man was made to understand that his place in the team depended mainly on his fielding. In the return match A's good bowler, performing no better than at the beginning of the earlier match, bagged 8 wickets for 23, 6 from catches, and A won easily.



X1, X2, X3, represent different positions of the thrower. S1, S2, S3, represent the slips; P, the Point.

Now for some hints to the youthful captain as to how he may obtain that most desirable unit, a perfect fielding side. It must be postulated that our captain is, as all captains should be, a man of character and determination, not to be turned from his purpose by a little temporary unpopularity.

First he must organize his fielding practice on scientific lines and insist upon regular attendance. The usual fielding practice is for someone to hit "sky-ers" to half a dozen or more men spread fan-wise in front of him; better than nothing, but very far from being good enough. One hitter for five in the field is about the right number, and the hitter must be something of an expert; it is not so easy as it looks to put the ball in the right direction. For practice in front of the

wicket put the men at long-on, long-off, mid-on, mid-off, and cover. The hitter should not hit catches only, but put in some hard ground-swipes and long bouncing strokes. He will find it hardest to feed cover, but with a little practice should be able to make hard slashes in this direction with fair accuracy; he will find it easier if he places the fieldsman rather more forward, towards extra-cover, than his usual post. The men should change position in rotation, taking a few balls at each.

For fielding in the slips, fine leg, and point (who for practice should stand rather behind where the stumps should be) the following method cannot be beaten: Let a hard thrower station himself about ten yards from the big roller, at a sharp angle from the face. He must change the angle from time to time by slight alteration of his position. Let three or four slips and a point take post at the proper distances from the roller, which takes the place of the batsman. The thrower will fling the ball hard at the face of the roller, and the latter will knock up for you a surprising variety of life-like catches. The diagram will make clear this method of practice, which is quite the best possible for slips.

The ball comes off at ordinary catching heights when it impinges on or near the side-bulge of the surface; when it hits higher up the slope, it flies higher; when below the bulge it will run low. Sometimes the ball must be thrown from, and the men posted on, the other side of the roller for practice with left-handed batsmen.

There remain long and short leg. The only effective method is for a man to toss easy lobs and full pitches to the on-side of the striker and for him to smite them where they ought to go. Two men may be in the deep, one in front, one behind the striker, and two similarly placed at short leg.

At all these practices a stump must be fixed a few yards from the striker (or thrower) and behind it posted a man, gloved and padded (the stumper of the team when available), and the closest attention paid to correct throwing-in; this is an *indispensable* part of the practice. Great pains must be taken until the fast long-hop rising to the bails from the out-field, or the sharp, straight catch to the keeper's hands from the in-field become automatic. What can be more infuriating than to have an easy run-out missed owing to mid-on or cover flinging in a half volley with the force of a cannon ball? Pace, direction, length all need practice. As to the first, a caution must be given to the in-field. If the men near the wicket make a practice of returning the ball smartly, even when no run is being attempted, the batsmen are likely to err on the side of caution, thus missing some likely singles. *But*, an important " but ", a fieldsman can return smartly without attempting to slay the wicket-keeper; never return a ball really hard unless a run is actually being attempted. The poor stumper's hands have quite enough to bear in the ordinary course.

See that you back up and don't stand too near the man you are backing. Eight to ten yards is about the distance.

Now for a few words of advice applicable to the captain specially. *Study your men*—bowlers, fieldsmen, batsmen opposed to you. To take the fieldsmen first: see to it that *in the ordinary practices* each man takes his turn at every position, for everyone should be able to take any place in an emergency. But *in all practice games* give each the place or places he takes in matches. There is no reason why a man weak in the slips or in the country should not get practice in those positions; but there is every reason why he should be where he shines

best in matches. So everyone should have his place fixed. For men in the country, throwing and sprinting are as necessary as catching and stopping. Never put a man out who is not a good thrower. Keep nervous men near the wicket. Many excellent slips miss "sitters" in the outfield through nervousness when waiting for a long catch.

With a full card of matches it is not always easy to arrange many practice games. It takes less time and is more useful to have thirteen men, letting each have a full quarter-hour batting, and take his regular match place when out, than to have a game between two picked sides. In the latter the weaker batsmen will get no practice at all; perhaps the change bowlers will not be called upon. When there is no time in the week for a thirteen-man game, it is a good plan to have one net-practice without the net. A full field can be placed in position; two or three bowlers can be bowling. The batsman probably has rather fewer balls bowled to him, but, on the other hand, he gets better practice, and has a far better chance of learning his weaknesses.

In all net-practice the captain must "put on" certain bowlers, just as he would in a match; he should see to it that each batsman gets one of the best bowlers to bowl at him, that none of the bowlers bowl themselves out, and that only those who show some promise bowl at all. Often one sees a small crowd near the bowling stump, scrambling for the balls as they are rolled up. This is very bad, and a lot of wretched tosh is sent up to the batsman, rendering his practice useless.

Perhaps the most important duty of the captain is the selection of the team. Here he has to prove himself; for the general good he may have to sack his best friend or the most popular fellow in the school. The first selection should be the wicket-keeper; next the two first bowlers, and at least three change bowlers. The remaining four or five should be chosen *mainly for their fielding*. The batting may be left to itself; there is sure to be plenty of sound batting among the best bowlers and fieldsmen. Even a brilliant batsman who is a really bad fielder should be discarded until he has learned to field.

A captain must know his bowlers, study their power of endurance, &c. There are times when a bowler, even while still bowling at his best, should be taken off and given a rest. It is far better to give the rest in time than to let him bowl himself "all out". The captain should also know, even better than the bowler himself, where the latter is most often hit. It is at times even good to change merely for the sake of change; e.g. a bowler is bowling well, a good length and all the rest of it, but a dangerous bat shows signs of having "played himself in"; a change, even to an inferior bowler if of a quite different type, is often worth trying for a few overs under such circumstances.

A last piece of advice. Study the hostile batsmen. Most batsmen have a weak stroke or two; the first time you play against a man try to find out his weaknesses; next time your knowledge may help you to trap him. Everyone has heard that Armstrong, in the last Australian tour, had the favourite strokes and the weak strokes of the leading English batsmen charted, and the charts distributed among his men, so that each might shift his position as a new batsman followed in. This, of course, goes farther than a school captain need go. But very much can be done by the watchful eye and the retentive memory.

Bumble, the Story of a Tame Badger

By J. C. Bristow-Noble

Bumble came into our possession one sunny May day. Bumble, we must explain, was a badger cub—such a pretty little fellow, and so fat and round—and he was dug out of a big " sett ". The badger's home is called a sett, not a burrow or earth. " Sett " is derived from the word " seat ". Apart from the wild ponies of the New Forest and of the moors in Devon and Cornwall, and the wild deer in the south-west of England and in Scotland, the badger is now the largest wild animal in the British Isles, so what could be more fitting than that his home should be referred to as a sett or seat, just as the stately country homes of some of our rich people are called " seats ". And like these magnificent country houses, the badger's house is, also, in a way magnificent. It does not consist of one or two tunnels, like the home of the fox, but of several tunnels, although often there are only two entrances, which may be regarded as a front and back door.

The tunnels are made one on the top of another, like stories in a building, and each communicates with the other. Here and there are splendid rooms. These, however, are not called rooms, but ovens, because they resemble in shape and size the big ovens in which bakers bake their bread. Each is used for a different purpose. Here is a bedroom, here a dining-room, here a storeroom, here a dressing-room.

In the last the badger grooms his coat and washes his face and feet on his return from his nightly ramble in search of food. In the walls of the storeroom there are neat little cupboards, and in these the badger stores acorns, wild nuts, and bulbs for use during severe winter weather. From this habit of storing food the badger derives his name, which comes from the Latin word *bladarius*, a dealer in corn. Brock, another name for him, is, of course, Scottish.

The sett in which Bumble was found was enormous. It took about twenty men, working three whole days and nights, to open it out. The tunnels descended to a depth of more than twelve feet, were spread over a space of quite fifteen square yards, and all were so large that a man could have crawled along them. Moreover, all were beautifully domed. The ovens or rooms were, also, very large. They were numerous too, and, like the tunnels, exquisite in shape. The sett was said to be over a century old, hence its great size, for the badger is continually enlarging his home. Bumble was found in one of the largest ovens in a nest of quite half-a-cart load of bracken fern and dead grass. He was not the only occupant. He had a mother and father and three brothers and sisters, but he was the only prisoner we made. The rest we allowed to escape. Bumble did not seem sorry at our taking him home. When we first picked him up

he cried a little in a squeaky voice; no more than he should have done, otherwise what a hard-hearted little fellow we should have thought him!

He was only between two and three weeks of age, that is, as far as we could judge; still we found him none too easy to hold, for already his teeth were sharp and strong, and he bit our hands and arms. Then, when we tried holding him by the scruff of his neck, we found he could inflate his neck and thus make it difficult for us to hold him in this way. Presently, however, he settled down affectionately in our arms, and proudly we carried him home. The curiosity the mite excited was amusing. The news of our capture spread like wildfire, and people for miles around began to call almost at once and ask to be shown our new and rare pet. Although badgers have inhabited the district for, it is believed, many centuries, few of the locals had seen one before. This was because brock is very shy, and rarely if ever leaves his home before the night has come, and is careful to return to it before the day dawns. So it will be readily understood how difficult it is to get a glimpse of him in his natural haunts.

We gave the little badger the name of Bumble, because the first thing we offered him to eat was a dead bumble-bee. He gazed at the insect for a few moments, then smelt it suspiciously, and then of a sudden gobbled it up with great relish. It may seem strange, but it is true that badgers are fond of bees of all kinds to eat, as well as wasps and honey. Neither the bees nor wasps seem able to sting them, or if they are, the stings cause no pain or injury. In this respect badgers take after their distant kinsman, the bear, to whose family they belong.

Next we fitted our pet with a collar, and, buying a baby's bottle, filled it with milk diluted with a little warm water, and placed the teat near his mouth. He sniffed it, and, scenting the milk, at once took the teat in his mouth and began to drink ravenously It was as clear as day that Bumble was very hungry. Doubtless he had had nothing to eat and little to drink during the three days and nights it had taken to dig him out of his home. There was a large audience to watch him take his first drink of milk in captivity. I dare say there were fully fifty grown-ups and children present. As Bumble sucked, he kept his small, bright black eyes on his many admirers. Yet he did not appear to be afraid. On the contrary, he seemed to be a very self-possessed young gentleman. When he had satisfied his thirst, he backed a few inches from the bottle and began to clean his muzzle, which was smeared with milk, with his tongue and forepaws.

No animal is more particular than the badger, both as regards his personal appearance and his home. At least once a year he thoroughly cleanses the whole of the tunnels and ovens of the latter by scraping them and pushing the earth thus removed into the open air. This is why many setts are so enormous. You see, each year they are made a little larger.

Having completed his toilet, Bumble began to look around for, it was clear, somewhere to lie down and sleep. So we made him up a snug bed of soft oat straw in a little shed from which he could not escape, and having seen him bury himself in the straw, left him to slumber and snore.

On our going to the shed next morning, Bumble got up at once and came forward to meet us. We were surprised at this boldness. The truth to tell, Bumble was hungry and wanted his breakfast. We picked him up, and instead of biting our hands and arms as he did when we first took him prisoner, he began to nose about. We got the bottle and gave him a little more

It was no match for Bumble

diluted milk. Then we put him down on the lawn. He looked about him in the bright sunshine in a dazed sort of way for a few moments, and then with amazing quickness seized a wee chicken that had crept up unnoticed to peep at the new and mysterious stranger. And almost as quickly as the mite was seized, it was killed and eaten, and Bumble seemed proud of the achievement. At all events he looked about him with an expression that seemed to say, " See what I can do ". We grabbed him up and scolded him, but it is to be feared that he did not understand. At least, he showed no sign that he understood.

The lawn was surrounded by high brick walls, so, having removed the rest of the chickens that were roaming about, we put Bumble down again. He rolled and tumbled about in the sunshine for a time, and then spying a kitten, decided there and then that it should be his friend and companion. He gamboled up to it, and, wooed as perhaps kitten was never wooed before, it took to him as readily as he took to it. For weeks the two were the best of friends. Every day they rolled and tumbled about together on the lawn, lapped milk from the same dish, and shared the mice, rats, birds, and small rabbits that were given them, to say nothing of the same bed. Bumble, we must say, learnt to lap about a week after being captured, and grew and developed at an amazing rate. Besides milk and the other food mentioned, he was fond of most fruit, dog-biscuits, carrots, slugs, and worms.

We thought the kitten and he would never grow tired of one another, but would be

life-long friends. But we were mistaken. One morning they quarrelled. It was about a few dead mice. Bumble greedily wanted the lot. To this the kitten objected strongly, and began to spit and claw. But it was no match for Bumble, who, ignorant of his strength, threw himself on his little companion and, alas! killed it.

With one bite he crushed its head, and death was instantaneous. Bumble was dazed by the sudden stillness of his little companion. It was clear he could not understand it. Then gradually the tragedy dawned upon him, and the expression of bewilderment changed to one of fear. As the kitten lay at his feet, he poked it with his nose, just, it seemed, to see if it was really dead, and then was noticed to quiver from head to foot.

Then came the strangest thing of all. He gently picked the kitten up, carried it to a flower border, and, digging a large and deep hole, buried it. Nothing prettier or more pathetic could be imagined. It is strange how quickly animals realize death and hasten to hide it. We have known rabbits to bury young ones that died, and dogs to bury their dead puppies; but Bumble's action came as a complete surprise.

For a few weeks he was the most lonely and sorrowful of badgers. It was obvious that he much missed his little companion. At length, however, he became his old, joyous self again, and his chief amusement now was to hide behind shrubs and jump out when people were passing and thus startle them.

This was unfortunate play, for presently it lost us the best charwoman we ever had. She happened to be crossing the lawn with a couple of buckets of water, and Bumble, springing from behind a shrub directly in front of her, tripped her up. Down she went, the buckets and water making such a noise, for Bumble was now a big, strong fellow.

He scampered to the other side of the lawn in his strange, sprawling way, and on the woman getting to her feet, she ran in the other direction, and in a little time left the premises, declaring she would not set foot on them again whilst so horrid a creature as Bumble was there—and she kept her word.

But, alas! Bumble had not much longer to live now. Indeed, the end was only a few weeks away. It came about in this way.

One night the door of his shed was not securely fastened, and unseen by anyone he pushed it open and wandered into the surrounding country. Presently he was met by some large dogs. How many nobody knows. Doubtless he regarded them as friends. Probably he began to play with them. Be that as it may, they turned upon him. There was an abundance of evidence that he put up a great fight for his life. The green turf, on which the battle was fought, was deeply scarred by the rolling and tumbling that took place. One of his opponents, a large shaggy sheep dog, lay dead, and another severely crippled, and there lay poor Bumble himself, terribly mauled and stone dead.

Thus ends the story of our first and last pet badger.

The Tuck that Toddled

By E. Talbot

Barnes was the greediest chap I ever struck.

To begin with, he was always gobbling in corners like a glutton. And to go on with, just as soon as the tuck shop opened at midday, you could bet your boots that Barnes would be already outside hammering at the door. To finish up with, whenever a chap had a hamper of tuck sent from home, you might safely depend that Barnes would haunt his footsteps and offer to be his dearest pal.

But, if ever Barnes showed his greedy nature—and if ever, by the way, he received a jolly good punishment for that said greed—it was on the day when his own hamper arrived.

All of us saw it come! And all of us grinned! It was large and ripping-looking. And we could see apples at any rate peeping through the straw. But that's all we saw of it, for a while at least. Barnes skidaddled away downstairs to open it, himself.

" Now for a bit of all right," said young Frazer to me. " We'll have a feast in our dorm to-night. As sure as nuts! A fine one, too, by the size of that hamper. And it will be a change to have Barnes with something to give away. It's generally that the boot's on the other foot; he's ready enough to get, but he's generally not over keen to give away." And Frazer grinned.

I grinned too. And for another reason. I could see, in my mind's eye, the hamper that had been promised to come to *me* from home next week. All the chaps in our dorm, except Frazer and me, had had their termly hampers already. But ours were still to come. " We've three hampers to sample still, then," I said aloud; " Barnes's to-night; and yours this week; and mine next week. The others are all done."

" And fine they were," says Frazer, licking his lips at the memory of the ripping hampers which had been served out fair and square round the dormitory that term by the rest of the chaps; " I hope ours are as good!"

He was licking his lips as I say—and so was I, when, of a sudden, we felt inclined to lick them still more energetically. For out of the school-door came Barnes, with a face which looked decidedly hampery. He stared round the playground, and then fixed his gaze on Frazer and me.

" He's coming! What ho! for a list of the contents," quoth Frazer.

We got it too. Though it wasn't rattled forth with quite as much enthusiasm as we'd expected. Along came old Barnes, " a bit heavily ", as Frazer remarked, which was no doubt accounted for by the tastes he must have had already. " I say, you chaps," said he, " I've got a—hamper."

" Right," said we. " We saw it come."

" And I've got a bit of a scheme on hand," went on Barnes, " that I hope you'll like. I thought——" he stopped for a moment and peered round.

" There's Perry and Peters just over there on the fives court," put in Frazer; " I'll bring them along, if you like. They're in

our dorm, and they'll want to know too."

It was at that moment, as Frazer uttered these innocent and most ordinary words, that I noticed a change creep over Barnes's face. "Hold on a bit," said Barnes, "I've something to say."

He said it too. We heard him out. Halfway through his rigmarole we felt inclined to kick him round the playground; but we refrained, for we simply couldn't believe that the chap wasn't having us on. He wasn't, though. He meant every word that he said in deadly earnest. "You see," said the chap, "my hamper's not so jolly full as I thought. And—well, the idea came to me that I'd make a bit of a change. How about asking just a few chaps; one's own special chums, you know? And making a regular night of it. That's done in loads of other schools, I know."

"It's not done *here*," said Frazer, who was looking Barnes up and down as though he'd just escaped from a lunatic asylum. "As you know, you've jolly well sampled all the dormer hampers up to this. If, of course, you don't mean to ask Graham and me I'm glad you've done it. And we'll refrain from eating your prog. But——"

"It's not that at all," put in Barnes, growing as red as a prize beetroot. "The fact is, I've got plenty for both of you chaps. And it's the *other* chaps I thought I'd leave out this time. It's not ill-feeling; don't think that. But there's so beastly little to go round. Of course," he added hurriedly, perhaps seeing the sick look upon our countenances though not evidently guessing why it was there, "we'd not have the feast in the dormer. Down in the box-room, perhaps, after school hours. Or——"

I really think that the pair of us would have ducked the chap in the nearest pond, if we'd had to stand another moment of that kind of talk. I saw Frazer's jaw drop open, and I saw his hands clench. But then——

"Barnes!" screamed Matron from across the playground. And the chap was off like a shot.

"See you again on the subject," he roared as he went.

"I say," whispered Frazer to me when he'd gone, "what's wrong with him? He must be absolutely dotty! And why choose *us*? He's no chum of ours. And we're the very two who haven't ever offered him anything out of our hampers, for the simple reason that they haven't come yet. Whereas both Perry and Peters——" He stopped.

"It's just *because* of that, you young shaver!" I told him. "Don't you see? He's got enough, so he thinks, in that ripping hamper of his to feed three; himself and two others. If he left *us* out, his brainy idea is that we'd leave *him* out when our hampers eventually arrive. But he's bolted and swallowed all he's likely to get from the others. So——" We both turned and surveyed the figure of Barnes as he walked away from us across the playground.

"The—swine!" said young Frazer; and really one couldn't help thinking that the name was well chosen. "Let's have him on—hard! Let's give him a lesson! He deserves the very worst a chap could get."

He got it too. But before Frazer and I had decided everything we had a jolly good confab together. We took the rest of the dorm into the secret too. They weren't going to be left out. We'd decided that we'd teach Barnes a rattling good lesson that he wouldn't forget till his dying day. Little did he guess, however, what he was in for, as he made his way back to Frazer and me after dinner was over.

"Sorry to leave you, you chaps," said Barnes. "But Matron wanted me. About my tuck, you know. I didn't think it necessary to tell her what we'd arranged."

"What *have* we arranged, by the way?" inquired Frazer, who was trying hard, for

the sake of our scheme, to keep the coldness from his tone.

" Why, to have a threesome," said Barnes. " Just us three. The others needn't be invited. There's no particular reason, after all, why a chap shouldn't invite none but his best pals. And—well, when shall we eat the tuck? And where?"

This was part of our scheme. I spoke up then. " Look here," said I; " the boot-room's no go. To begin with, we never have much time by day to eat largely except at meal-times. And to go on with, we've got a better plan. How about a feast in the box-room. Nobody goes there. It's just above the dorm, and we shan't be heard. A midnight one, you know. A rattling good notion. We could turn up there as nippy as you please."

I saw Barnes look perfectly delighted at the idea. At first, no doubt, he had thought that we meant to suggest that he should have it in the dormer after all, and share all round. But we'd decided not to suggest that; we knew a better way. " The box-room? Right-o!" said Barnes. " Why, we could carry the prog up in instalments. You'll turn up?"

" We'll nip out of bed as soon as the dormer's dark," we said; " and then—what ho!"

I shan't forget that evening in a hurry. By the time prep was over we'd got all the prog upstairs, and a rattling lot there was. Frazer and I felt more and more sick at the greed of Barnes as we surveyed it, for we knew, perfectly well, that there was enough and to spare for six medium-appetited chaps at least.

" Look here," said Barnes, when the hamper was up there at last. " I say, we'll have a fine time. Here, take a nut now, won't you?"

" No, thanks," said we. " We'd rather wait. Let's lay it out."

It was Frazer who took the chief part in laying out that supper, for he and I had arranged all this between ourselves. Barnes looked a bit scornful when Frazer suggested a cloth and went downstairs for one of his perfectly clean shirts. Frazer made a fine noise, too, over choosing the exact place where the " table-cloth " should be laid. And, if Barnes hadn't been in such a rattling good humour at the thought ahead, and if his mouth hadn't already been stuffed with " samples " as he called them of everything eatable, he might have considered that Frazer was making rather an ass of himself. As it was, though, Barnes didn't. He surveyed the feast, laid out on Frazer's shirt almost like a picnic, with round eyes.

" I say," said Barnes; " now, listen here. Just as soon as we hear the other chaps snore, we'll all creep up. Twig?"

" Rather," said we. " But we won't go all together. Suppose one of them wakes, and asks what's on?"

" You go first, then," said Barnes at once; " as soon as you're safely out of the door I'll come on. But don't forget to wait until I get there."

" Right-o!" said we. The chap was playing finely into our hands.

Perry and Peters began to snore almost at once when the lights were out. So awfully quickly, too, that I was half afraid that Barnes would twig. He didn't, though. He was too anxious for his prog to think of anything else. He began to move about so restlessly at Peters' third snore that I was afraid the chaps would give the show away by laughing. I was also afraid that he might decide, if I didn't hurry, that he would get upstairs first. " Lie low a bit," I whispered as I passed his bed, " and then come on."

As soon as I was outside the dormer door, though, *how* I nipped up the stairway to the attic! I made my way to the white cloth too, which Frazer had laid, and I turned it

up at one corner, for Frazer and I had arranged that that cloth should be laid right over the trap-door entrance to the attics which opens right over my bed. It only needed the bolt to be drawn back for it to open downwards, and then—— Well, I waited to draw that bolt until I heard Barnes tip-toeing up the stairs. And then I pulled it back and raced past him through the door. "Go on," said I; "I'm off downstairs for something. Begin without us, if you like."

I was off down the stairs with my candle in my hand, leaving Barnes to make what he could of the fact that every single scrap of the tuck had toddled. It had vanished into space so far as he knew. It was gone!

"Oh!" I heard him snort, as I reached the dormer again hot-foot, to find Perry and Peters and young Frazer, too, sitting up in their beds, hugging their knees and chortling, while on my bed, just under the trap-door, lay the most awful jostle of tumbled tuck you ever saw.

"It'll be all right. It won't give your bed away. My shirt is taking all the stains," laughed Frazer, as I came in. "That's why I made him have a cloth. And to hide the trap-door too, of course. I was so afraid he'd twig!"

"You beasts, you! You greedy beasts!" came a strangled voice from above. And there, of course, was old Barnes peering down at us. "I might have guessed it of you, Graham and Frazer. It's all a put-up job. It's——" But we'd had enough of him by this time. We weren't going to hide from him any longer what we thought.

"Look here!" said Peters, suddenly standing up in his bed and looking up towards the trap-door opening. "It *is* a put-up job! And not one of us is ashamed of it. But, as for eating your miserable tuck, there's not one of us would touch it. Here's your feast. And you're welcome to come down and eat it. Every scrap. For not one of us will help you out." And we all arose from our beds, and, taking four ends of Frazer's shirt, one apiece, we lifted the tuck bodily and threw it on to Barnes's own bed. "Come along down!" we called; "and shut the trap-door before you come. And no one will disturb you while you feed."

But, as he slunk into the room, we were all chanting softly; and the words of our song were as follows:

"For he's a pig of a fellow,
Yes, he's a fine greedy fellow,
A thorough hog of a fellow,
And so——say all of us!"

We heard the poor chap chewing in the darkness far through the night; but I doubt if he finished everything, though it was hidden away by morning; for we woke to find it gone. But the boot-boy was seen carrying away some rather unmistakable scraps at lunch-time next day. And Perry said that he met Barnes digging something into the ground with a spade, and looking uncommon furious. And we had mice in that dormer for a while after that night. So all those things account for some of the hamper-tuck. There really was too much of it for a midnight feast for one!

The Boys frae Cogie

By J. D. Westwood

I

Much as my cousin Ruddy knows about the noble art of fishing, there is no doubt he has still a great deal left to learn.

Ruddy and I are in the Fourth at Beddinghurst, and, my people being in India, I generally spend my holidays with him at his Highland home, which is a mouldy sort of castle covered with blue slates and stuck amongst moors in the fastnesses of Glen Crummles. The walls between the rooms are six feet thick. Half the place is kept shut up, and one night, when there was an awful racket in the empty part, Ruddy assured me it was due to ghosts, that part of the house being haunted. With native modesty he had stowed his head under the bedclothes, but he poked it out to say that when you heard a row like that going on it meant something unusual was going to happen.

As Uncle Hamish is inclined to be hard up, the shooting is always let, except for the hares about the curly greens in the garden. But he can't conscientiously let the fishing in the Crummles River, because of what he calls public opinion, but really because of the " Boys frae Cogie ". Cogie is a sort of mining town about fifteen miles away, and the Boys have a fishing club which exists for no other reason than to skin the Crummles.

You never know when they are coming. On Saturdays they swarm up by the dozen with rods tied to the frames of their bicycles, or in motor-buses and char-a-bancs stiff with pipers. Then there's Empire Day, and the King's Birthday, and their own birthdays, and Good Friday. And when they aren't celebrating any other kind of holiday they are on strike. The Boys frae Cogie boast that the Germans took them very seriously during the war, and I don't doubt them.

Uncle Hamish nearly dropped his pipe when we told him about the row we had heard in the empty part of the house. He was standing on the gravel looking down the hill-side to where the Crummles could be seen shining miles away.

" Who has been stuffing you with that rubbish?" he exclaimed. " You'll be seeing the phantom fish next."

He took a look at the sky, which was quite cloudless, and sniffed the air a little.

" It's not much of a fishing day," he said, " but you'll probably have the water to yourselves. Get Dougald to drive you down in the dogcart, and see if you can't get some of this idiotic nonsense out of your heads."

Uncle Hamish has a way of putting matters in another light, and, as we threw our tackle into the trap, I was wishing I hadn't put my head under the bedclothes also. But Ruddy holds that a Highlander is only half a Highlander if he isn't superstitious. It's a kind of birthright with him, and he said that he would certainly do the same thing next time; whilst Dougald whacked the cob along and told the most gruesome legpulls about bodeful events

which always wound up with a wake. He kept wagging his beard and saying:

" Oh, yess, things iss sure to go wrong. They iss certain to go a-a-all wrong, whateffer."

And right enough they began to look baleful the moment we turned on to General Wade's bridge over the Crummles.

Boadicea the mare planted with a snort of indignation and tried to sit down, and Dougald shrivelled up, as if he had colic, with hoarse and horrible sounds. For as far as the human eye could penetrate, for miles and miles in every direction, the landscape was dotted, starred, and spangled with Boys frae Cogie. The banks of the stream were revetted with them, and the mob who couldn't find a footing on the bank was in the water up to the waist, plumbing the depths with worm and weevil, or clinging to the scarred hill-side on the chance of a stray flying fish.

Nothing came amiss. Wherever it was damp, there were the Boys frae Cogie, some in cloth caps, others in bowler hats, Balmoral bonnets, or glengarries, and one toothless old patriarch—the one who had brought Boadicea up goggling on her haunches—tottered on the bridge before us with a sack of worms swinging from his scraggy neck, his grey locks garnished with a genuine beaver hat.

There was no mistaking the fact. We had struck the Annual Competition. The spell was working.

With a smile that joined the brim of the beaver at either side, the old chap sidled up to Ruddy. He winked at us through a pair of brass-rimmed spectacles that ran the beaver hard, and we felt ourselves wallowing up to the neck in his confidence.

" Ye see," he said cautiously, poking his clay pipe at us and waving it towards the Boys, " they won't let each other out o' their sight. It's not so much a case of catching fish as of seeing your neebour doesna catch them. It's the Competeetion, ye see."

" So long as they're pleased——" Ruddy began, but the old sport chipped in again:

" They're pleased right enough, but I'm not just as young as I was, and I can't get away with it as I used to. You see, on a fishing day like this—which as you might say is no fishing day—it's brains wins, and what's the use of brains if you can't get away with it?"

Now we began to get the drift of the conversation. Ruddy was wearing his Beddinghurst blazer, and the patriarch took him for a boy scout disguised as a zebra and fairly bursting to do kind deeds.

" I was just thinking," the old man went on, sidling still closer, " I was just thinking that maybe if you could find room in the trap for an auld body like me, we might win up the glen to a place I'll show you. My name's no MacCallum for naething."

That got Ruddy's middle stump.

" Hop up, Mr. MacCallum," he said. " I am not one to resist beauty in distress. But what if they spot you?"

Mr. MacCallum heaved his great basket up in front and made himself comfortable.

" Brains, laddie, brains," he murmured. " It's no' to be expected they'll fail to remark our withdrawal. We'll drive on past the hotel—aye, and keep driving. Keep driving."

Dougald's beard stuck out in front like a sporran in an east wind, and he fairly whistled with indignation. But Cogie was already closing in. No sooner had Mr. MacCallum subsided into his seat than there was a whirr all up and down the Crummles. As the lines came reeling in it was like an expeditionary force of crickets mobilizing, and Mr. MacCallum remarked, with some satisfaction: " We are obsairved, gentlemen. In twa minutes they'll have

He regarded us with a mixture of deference and admiration

vanished like snaw off a dyke, for they're no' for losing sight of MacCallum. Brains, laddie, brains!"

Dougald turned Boadicea into the road that leads down Glen Crummles, and you could see the deluded Boys splashing through the stream and swarming over the heather and bog myrtle with their creels leaping behind them. The old and the young, the halt and infirm, grandfathers, deacons, elders, and orra men came tumbling and rolling between the river and the road, and the ancient warrior who tried to rush the barbed-wire fence with a basket on his back may be dangling there still for all I know.

And there sat the MacCallum, with a smug look of triumphant satisfaction, smoking his pipe in voluptuous ease, with his beaver tilted over his nose, warbling, " Brains, laddie, brains!"

Boadicea seemed to enter into the spirit of the thing, for she made the flinders fly, and that was the last of the Boys we saw till she shied off with her hair on end at something that glittered like a Bond Street jeweller's in a patch of long grass in front of the hotel. It was an arresting and intricate mixture of black velvet and tartan, silver buttons, cairngorms, dirks, blackcock's feathers, and red whiskers. I thought someone had mislaid the family plate, but Mr. MacCallum explained that it was Rory, the piper of Cogie, enjoying his own outing in his own way. Rory, he said, was " nae fisher, but a fair devastating tempest wi' the pipes ".

Dougald dropped us about a couple of

miles farther along, where a fair-sized burn came splashing down the hill-side and under the road. He himself explained that he couldn't wait for us, as he had a pressing appointment in the garden; so away he went to massage the Brussels sprouts and comb the slugs out of the kail, while we shoved the beaming MacCallum through a stone dyke and up the whins and bracken to the brow of the bank. We dropped him at the summit with a shout of " Excelsior!", and he removed his beaver and regarded us with a mixture of deference and admiration.

" Just fancy," he observed solemnly, " how you could tell me for a bootmaker, and the author, foreby, of the justly celebrated Excelsior footwear! Brains, laddie, —sheer brains! Excelsior for all weathers, laddie, and brogues a speciality. And it's me that makes them, MacCallum o' Cogie."

We promised to make a mental note of this interesting fact and introduce the peerless Excelsior footer dreadnought into Beddinghurst. Then the old boy explained that the great thing about the Breigan Burn was its grand seclusion, mounted a Stuart tackle, and recommended us to try the " wurrum ". The brogue specialist was all for the wurrum, and told us we would have nae luck wi' the flee, and then we parcelled off the water and got to work.

But it was very soon apparent that the trout in the Breigan Burn were ignorant of the first rudiments of fishing, and even Mr. MacCallum, who had hauled himself on his moleskin waistcoat through nearly a mile of thistles, was fain to admit that all was not well with the world.

" Ye canna say the fish are taking," he observed. " At least, they're no taking the wurrum."

He shook his beaver with misgiving and prostrated himself before the fish once more.

II

" Ye canna say Excelsior's brains are getting to work, can ye?" said Ruddy.

" The spectre of Crummles, on the other hand," I rejoined darkly, " is. It's rough on the dear old boy, Rud. He deserves a better fate."

We had taken off our blazers and rolled up our sleeves, and were sitting in the heather below a long series of noisy waterfalls which rumbled amid rowans and bracken into one deep, broad basin after another, and I was looking up at the foaming white tails of water, whilst Ruddie enlarged on the beauties of fishing etiquette as understood in Cogie.

" Our style," he was saying, " is not cramped by the trammels that fetter the Sassenach. Freedom is the watchword, Codling. Britons never will be slaves, though they don't mind being poachers. There's nothing in this Competeetion to say how you must catch your fish, so long as you catch him yourself."

And then, without warning, there happened that which made the day eventful. There was a terrific, earth-shattering roar immediately overhead, the Breigan Burn left its rocky bed in the basin above us and soared like a cloud into the limpid heavens, and something that looked like a Boy frae Cogie dropped into the heather at our feet.

Mr. MacCallum, who had come up behind us, eyed the newcomer with disfavour

" That will teach ye to go playing wi' dynamite, Jimmy," he remarked. " If ye're not killed, which I'm not so sure of, you're disqualified. So you'd best be off afore the keepers gets you."

The mention of keepers seemed to revive Jimmy, for he picked himself up, felt himself all over, and cleared off without a word.

" He must have used near a pound o' the

stuff," said Mr. MacCallum. "Eh, the gowk! And he hasna waited for the harvest!"

Whereupon he laid down his rod and started to hunt round for any fish that might have been killed by the explosion.

As he was too busily employed garnering the spoil to take any further notice of us, we left him and started up the hill, taking a short cut to the hotel. But hardly had we taken a dozen steps when Ruddy suddenly uttered a howl of delight and pounced on something that was kicking about in the bracken.

At first sight I thought he had captured a blue hare. Then I saw it was a huge fish, and was wondering how a salmon had managed to scramble up those waterfalls, when Ruddy flattened it out to display a lanky, blue-backed old trout nearly a yard in length, with a ragged tail and a mouth like a killer whale.

"Great Jehoshaphat!" I exclaimed, "if Excelsior takes that thing along with him he'll scoop *all* the prizes!"

But Ruddy told me not to worry about old Excelsior.

"This one's going home to Father," he said. "And oh, won't Father be pleased! We had better both get the same yarn about how we caught him, Codling, because he'll cross-question us like a leading counsel. He's certain to spot it's a legpull sooner or later, so let it be later. But there's no harm in letting the Boys see what can be done with an artificial fly and good eyesight."

Mr. MacCallum turned round at the sound of our voices, and when his eyes fell

"What wull ye tak' for that fush?"

on the monstrous thing that Ruddy held up for his inspection they nearly started out of his head. Then his mouth began to open slowly. It was still opening when we disappeared over the brow of the hill, and the upper part of his face had vanished under the brim of his beaver.

By this time we were becoming weak and wobbly for want of food. We had told Dougald to let Mrs. Beamish of the hotel know that we would be looking in for a sup and a bite, but time had sped on winged feet, and, with our strength fast giving out, we were tottering bravely along a grassy cart track towards a meal when we found ourselves confronted with a forbidding, flat-faced individual who frowned under a sagging Balmoral bonnet which had seen happier days.

He stopped dead, and a shudder ran through his huge frame when he caught sight of the great trout. As he passed a hand over his blinking eyeballs he seemed to be struggling for utterance. Ruddy still had his sleeves rolled up and his coat was thrown over his shoulder, and anyone with half an eye would have imagined he had been pursuing the nefarious and forbidden pastime known as " tickling " to the south, and " guddling " to the north of the Border.

" Ye've been guddling," cried the Balmoral bonnet hoarsely, in the accusing manner of one who makes a scandalous discovery.

" Aye," said Ruddy in his native brogue, which sounded as if he were dragging his teeth out of a caramel. " D'ye come frae Cogie?"

The reply was couched in the sort of noises a drowning man would naturally make on rising to the surface for the third time and finding the straw had been mislaid.

" Aye. What wull ye tak' for that fush? Twa shillings?"

" Na!"

" Fower?"

" Na!"

" Sax?"

" We're gaun to eat it. We're hung-g-ry."

" I'll give ye saxpence not to sell it."

" I'm telling ye it's no' for selling."

" To naebody?"

" Naebody frae Cogie, onyway."

A look of relief came over his face and he said:

" Then ye'll no' be needing the saxpence?"

Then we told him where he would find Excelsior, and the tidings cheered him up still further.

" Ye'd best hide the trout," he said, as he went off at a trot, and, as the advice was sound, Ruddy wrapped it in his jacket.

" Shove on, MacDuff," he cried, to encourage my faltering steps. " Hasten, or we perish from exhaustion."

III

Rory the piper was still snoring on the grass near the hotel door with the late afternoon sun splashing on his cairngorms, and just within the hall, where hangs the case containing the record pike, there stood a table loaded with brand new fishing-baskets, reels, rods, a pair of large scales, and a tall silver cup, carved with dates and the name of MacCallum, with Do., Do., Do., all the way down. Old Excelsior had apparently won the prize every year since the cup was presented, and one began to realize why it was that the Boys displayed such a marked reluctance to let him out of their sight. Even now one or two of them were sitting round expectantly keeping an eye on the prizes.

Mrs. Beamish did us uncommonly well as usual, and we were flushed, not to say bloated, with high living when the rhythmic tramp and grind of the justly celebrated

Excelsior footwear on the hard road without betrayed the return of the competitors.

As the table still sported some scones and a bun or two, the weighing-in was in progress by the time we drifted quietly in and took up a strategic position to watch the proceedings. The scene was one of bustle and confusion, and, as basket after basket was turned out and weighed with feverish haste, it was apparent to the eye of the intelligent observer that the object in view was to get the business settled before Mr. MacCallum's return.

The president was a grey-headed old miner, with the richly inlaid complexion of one to whom unlooked-for explosions are no novelty, and it needed no Sherlock to divine that judging of fishing competitions was no more a novelty than taking part in mining upheavals. He emptied out a few dozen round lead sinkers that had found their way into one fish by stealth, whilst gravel appeared to be the staple article of diet with a good many others. The average take seemed to be somewhere about ·66666 (recurring) lb.

Excitement, of course, ran high, and the odds were all in favour of a thoughtful young man who had purchased a half dozen herring and a pound of cod from a hawker, and the president was standing with a stop-watch in his hand, counting out MacCallum in a tense silence, when a baker's cart drove up with the dear old boy sitting on the roof.

An ominous growl rose from the assembled competitors, but the president, whose own catch was well below the average, and who could therefore afford to be strictly impartial, disallowed all objections.

" There's still a minute and a half to go," he announced, and when the hero of the hour had scrambled down, and the contents of his capacious basket had overflowed the scales in lavish profusion, he held up his hand for silence.

" Gentlemen," he said, " we should be proud to be associated with a fisher wha can catch fish on a day like this, when Nature clearly never intended them to be caught. But there's secrets in fishing as there is in everything else. It's a trade, as you might say, like any other, and there's no call to be inquiring too closely into our respected colleague's amazing profeeciency."

" No call to inquire?" shouted someone on the outer edge of the circle, and there was a sensational moment as our acquaintance of the Balmoral bonnet pushed his way to the front. " No call to inquire?" he repeated, " I'll show he didna catch them. Aye, I'll show you that, and there's my ain lot."

He whirled his basket round by the strap and deposited it on the table with a thump that sent the silver trophy flying, and a moment later another fine haul of trout was being weighed amid murmurs of astonishment. There was now no doubt that if old Excelsior could be knocked out of the running the Balmoral had it stone cold, and the excited assembly surged forward with shouts of: " Give him air! Give him air! Hear what Dawvid has to say!"

The president once more appealed for order, and, clearing his throat, warned the Balmoral solemnly that anything he said would be used as evidence against him.

" Consider weel afore you cast aspersions on a name and clan of the highest respectability," he admonished; " and bear in mind this is a terrible charge you're bringing against an aged man, a staunch supporter of the Free Kirk and the Cogie Angling Association, and the best cobbler in Cogie foreby. Gin you hae weel considered, you may speak."

And, whilst Mr. MacCallum stood by

like a terrier watching a rat from under his bristling beaver, the accuser spoke:

"You'll mind them twa boys that drove him off in the cart," he began. "Weel, it was them that guddled his trout for him."

And Mr. MacCallum said in deep and sorrowful tones:

"He canna pro-o-ove it."

"I seen the boys," protested Balmoral, and the maligned MacCallum glanced round the circle in triumph.

"Since he produces no witnesses," he said, "we maun cross-examine him. Dawvid ye'll answer a question."

Dawvid jerked his bonnet over one eye and looked truculent.

"You say, Dawvid, there was twa boys?"

"There was. Twa boys."

"How kent ye they were guddling?"

"Their sleeves was turned up over their elbows."

"There's no call to be inquiring too closely"

MacCallum smiled grimly as he went on:

"And there, watching ye from the door and hearkening to your havers, stands Mistress Beamish hersel', and, if my eyes do not deceive me, her sleeves are rolled up above her elbows. Would ye say, now, that Mistress Beamish had been guddling?"

"They had a fish," maintained the witness stoutly.

"And ye conclude that possession of a fish implies a chairge of guddling? You have some fish yourself. Are we to conclude that ye guddled them?"

Dawvid was silent.

"We gather from your attitude that our surmise is correct," went on the other. "Now, Dawvid, answer me this. We'll not ask you to describe those boys, but

we'll ask you to tell us how many fish they had."

"Wan," answered Dawvid.

"Only *one*?"

"A-aye!"

"A little one or a big one?"

"A terrible big wan." He said this very solemnly, and Mr. MacCallum looked at him in astonishment.

"From the way you speak of it, Dawvid, it's easy seeing it was nae ordinary fish."

"'Deed," said Dawvid, with conviction, "you're right there."

"And how big would you say it was?"

The wind swayed the lace curtains behind which we were sitting, and we craned forward anxiously. There was something in MacCallum's voice which told us Dawvid was about to make an ass of himself, and he did. He opened his mouth and his eyes wide, and held up his hands a clean yard apart to show the size of the trout, and, before he could utter a word, there was a roar of ribald laughter, someone slammed the Balmoral bonnet down over Dawvid's eyes, and, amid thunders of applause, the president solemnly handed the silver cup to old Excelsior.

. . . . . .

"Brains, laddie, brains," remarked Ruddy, with a sigh. "What are we to tell the governor about this trout, Codling? What about a blay wing and silver hackle? Under that ash tree below Baldie's farm, you know. Played us for twenty minutes—thought he'd break us any moment—most exciting—landing-net caught in the hooks of your boots—delay—every moment of value—— Oh, I say, look at Rory!"

I did not need to be invited to look at Rory, for it was difficult to remove one's eyes from the superb spectacle. That jewel in the gorgeous diadem of which Scotland is so justly proud, the Cogie Angling Association, was executing a Hieland fling all round the gratified MacCallum, who appeared darkly through a mist of gyrating tartan and silver buckles, whirling sporrans, and bright pink whiskers.

"You'll mind," said Ruddy, in his best Doric, "he's a fair devastating tempest wi' the pipes, is Rory. And if you're wise, Codling, you'll sling your tackle and slip out by the back way before he starts."

By Word of Mouth

By Richard Bird

I

" Sit down, Boyes!" snarled Mr. Ormond, popularly known as " Bat " Ormond. " Sit down, and write it out. Brown, go on!"

Boyes sat down as directed, and Brown got up, unhappily conscious of his own defects and anticipating the worst. In this he was not disappointed. After attempting to parse *ille* as a verb and *venit* as a conjunction with a conspicuous lack of success, he too was compulsorily retired and given the same imposition as his forerunner. Weeks, by request, filled the gap. As he arose the Third Form wondered how long old Weeks would hold out before being bottled, and speculated on who would be the next sacrifice. Weeks had but a short life (after all, it needs a magician to evolve a passive voice to *quispiam*, and Weeks's magic was distinctly amateurish), and Braye then essayed to achieve the impossible, viz. to make sense out of a stiff bit of unseen. Braye subsided after forty-five seconds, and then the storm broke.

" Disgraceful idleness—complete lack of interest—same every term—worst lot of dullards and incompetents I've ever seen — All want your tails twisting—not a trier among the lot——" And so forth, delivered much in the manner of a famished tiger suffering from acute prickly heat. The tirade ended with a familiar sentence: " The whole form will bring me a written translation of the passage to-morrow ".

There was no more to be said at the moment. Mr. Ormond—a wrathy and somewhat foolish preceptor—having blown off some of his daily steam, sulked in silence over a batch of proses, while the Third Form bowed its head and invoked imprecations. The end of the period and the morning's school arrived simultaneously about ten minutes later, to the relief of all concerned. The bell had hardly finished clanging ere Bat Ormond gathered up his papers and swept from the room in Olympian indignation. Then the second storm broke—this time from the outraged Third.

" The beastly swab!" growled Boyes, as the hated gown vanished through the door. " If I only could get him alone on a dark night——"

" Measly brute!" corroborated Weeks. " That's the fourth time running he's put me on and turned me! When I get a——"

" Bally tripehound!" was Braye's contribution. " Always got his knife into us."

" All very well," commented a quiet but judicial voice in the midst of the hurly-burly of recrimination. " You chaps were put on and turned. The rest weren't put on—but we got the same impot for doing nothing."

" You'd have been turned too," retorted Braye, " if you'd been put on. So you needn't worry."

" Daresay," said the new speaker—a grave, deliberate creature called Speke. " But that makes no difference. 'Tisn't fair that we should be posed without a show."

"Well, appeal to the Chief then," snapped Boyes, "and put a spoke in the Bat's wheel for once."

"Not a bad notion," said another victim thoughtfully. "Bat's a swine, and we've got a case."

"Bosh!" returned Speke, with quiet contempt. "What would the Chief do? He's fair, but he'd say, 'Not had a chance? Well, give me your book and I'll hear you now. Of course, if you know it——' And of course we shouldn't know it, and get the impot doubled. Bat's a pure dog, but that's no reason why you should yowl like a lot of asses."

"Well, you can take it quietly if you like," snorted Boyes. "I don't see why we should sit down under it. For two pins I'd call the Bat a cad to his face!"

Speke meditated a moment, fumbled at his waistcoat hem, and then offered the speaker a pair of shining objects.

"What *for*?" asked the astonished Boyes. "What are they *for*?"

"The two pins. To hear you call Bat a cad, I can easily spare a couple of pins."

"You ass!" snarled Boyes. But Speke was not to be put off.

"Just what I say!" he observed coolly. "All you blighters can *talk*, but when somebody takes you at your word, where are you?"

"Blitherer!" trumpeted Boyes. "Bat's a cad——"

"I know he is. You say you'd call him one, and then back down——"

"I wasn't backing down!"

"Looks like it," said Speke, with an annoying grin. "I believe in action, not words. I only want to prove you a funk——"

"I'm not a funk!"

"Then I'll increase my offer. Regardless of the expense, waste of time, wear of materials, &c., I'll withdraw the two pins and bet you a bob you daren't!"

"Daren't what?" temporized Boyes.

"Call the Bat a cad. Are you on for a bob?"

"Don't talk rot!"

"Just as I said!" repeated Speke, with a maddening whistle. "Like the rest, you're all talk. And words are cheap—cheaper than a couple of pins."

"I'll take you on," said Boyes, stung into action by the contemptuous logic. "That is, provided I can do it any way I like. I don't mean to get lammed or sacked for a measly bob."

"Any way you like," returned Speke loftily; "so long as you call Bat a cad and he hears you, I'll dub up my bob with pleasure. Yowl it round a corner if you like, and then run like a street arab with a bobby after him. It'll be worth it, for the Bat to hear the truth for once."

"All right," said Boyes, breathing hard, his reputation at stake. "I can choose my own time, I suppose."

"So long as you don't put it off till you've left the school," grinned the other.

"Inside of a week then," said Boyes, with quiet heroism. "Will that do?"

"Right-o!" and the conference adjourned.

During the next few days Boyes more than once regretted his acceptance of the bet. Heroism was all very well; injustice there had been, not merely once or twice, but frequently during his two terms' membership of the Third; the Bat undoubtedly deserved "telling off". But, had he not been unwise to let impulse run away with him and accept the scornful challenge of the blighter Speke? Bat *was* a cad—he would love to tell him so: but how to do it without disastrous consequences to himself? For it must certainly be done. Not merely the shilling was at stake: his reputation as a leader of thought and action was involved. Unless he pulled it off somehow, his position was lost. Yet how was it to

"What are you doing here?" asked Mr. Ormond

be done? Many were the schemes he revolved during the stilly hours of preparation or proses. None bore fruit. Always there seemed some hitch in the working arrangements of the same. Instead of leading to triumph and twelve pennyworth of chocolate, each separate scheme pointed grimly and unmistakably to the birch or a single ticket home. However, at last he thought of a plan which might be tried, and he revealed the same to Speke, who shrugged his shoulders.

"Might do," he said indifferently. "Doesn't call for much guts, but it fulfils the conditions. So go ahead."

Briefly, Boyes's plan was simple. Ormond's classroom was on the ground floor. In mild weather he always kept the window open. Why should he not get leave out of another class during school, shout the opprobrious message into Bat's room, and flee before pursuit could be organized? His voice probably would not be recognized; but to make assurance doubly sure, Boyes bought a Punch squeaker, through which he could emit anything in perfect security. This also was considered to be allowed under the terms of the bet, though Speke was disgustingly contemptuous. However, Boyes did not mind that. So long as he could save his face (and his bob) he was not unduly perturbed.

Accordingly, half-way through the second period one morning Boyes asked leave to go and get a handkerchief. Mr. Ford nodded assent, and the conspirator stole forth. He

went quickly along the drive, keeping his eyes skinned for possible stray " beaks ", till he stood opposite the Third Form window. His luck appeared good. The window was open and all was quiet within. No storms from the Bat at the moment: hence his message of cheer would be audible to the master and the audience alike. The window was too high to peer inside, so Boyes, with trembling fingers, put his squeaker in his mouth and trumpeted:

" ORMOND! YOU'RE A CAD!"

Then he turned and ran for his life for about thirty yards. A friendly corner was at hand; and round this he would be safe and out of sight. Boyes turned the corner, going all out. A second later a violent shock met him. There is an old problem which asks: " When the irresistible meets the immovable, what happens?" The answer was more or less supplied at that instant; for Boyes and a walking entity met, with an impact that might have cleft a Rugger scrum. Boyes sat down on the gravel with a whirring sensation about his brains. As he recovered, he observed the Immovable sitting opposite, dumbly regarding him with distaste.

" What are you doing here?" asked Mr. Ormond, regaining his breath.

" I had leave out to get a handkerchief, sir," panted Boyes, realizing the vanity of things human. It was hard luck that Bat should have been out of his form at that moment when everything else had gone so well.

" Well—do me three hundred lines," said Mr. Ormond, mechanically falling back on the indisputable *fasces* of the pedagogue. " And be more careful in future."

Boyes retired hurt to report progress. His feelings were not soothed a quarter of an hour later when Mr. Ford caught him sniffing audibly, and told him to blow his nose. Boyes thoughtlessly discovered that he had come out that morning without a handkerchief, and the natural corollary followed of two hundred lines for deceit. At the end of the morning he ate humble pie and retired from business.

" Bad luck," said Speke judicially on hearing of the accident. " Never mind! you can try again this afternoon."

Boyes regarded him sourly.

" Having collected five hundred lines today and been nabbed once by the Bat," he said, " I'm not going to have another shot. Here's your bob, and much good may it do you."

" It'll do me a lot of good," returned Speke amiably. " After all, I don't blame you. Perhaps it'll teach you to be a bit more careful of your tongue in future."

Boyes regarded his tormentor with irate disgust. Being half a stone lighter and two inches shorter than Speke, there was not much use in imposing the licking he deserved. None the less——

" Look here!" interrupted Weeks, with a sudden giggle. " I'll take on the bet, if you like!"

" What?"

" I've got no end of a notion. Safe as a house, and bound to come off."

" Let's hear it," said Speke cautiously. He had more respect for the brain of Weeks than for that of Boyes.

" Tell you as soon as you book the bet —not before."

" All right. A level bob that you'll call Bat a cad. But, if you take my tip, you won't try the same dodge again. It seems to me too risky."

" It's not the same," laughed Weeks, full of pride in the joy of a copyright creation. " It's an idea that's just occurred. Are you on?"

" Rather. Fire ahead!"

" Right-o! A level bob! Well, what's the date the day after to-morrow?"

" Why is a worm when it spins?" sneered Speke sardonically. " Is this a riddle?"

" Not much. What's the *date*?"

" April first."

" Right! All Fools' Day! Now, my scheme is this. I'll tackle Bat just after brekker—he's in a better temper then than in school. I'll run against him in the corridor——"

" Don't overdo the running. Ask Boyes!"

" You ass! I mean, I'll meet him by chance. Then I'll say, cheerily: ' Morning, sir! You're a cad!' Then Bat will stutter: ' What! *what's* that?' And, before he can lose his wool, I'll say: ' First of April, sir!' and he'll see it's not meant for cheek. He'll simply *have* to grin! The worst he *can* say will be: ' My boy! Even the first of April does not mean rudeness. But, seeing that you meant it for a joke——'."

" H'm! So that's your joke?" said Speke, cutting short the rhapsodies.

" Yes. Hot stuff, isn't it?"

" Frightfully hot," agreed Speke. " But, before you do it, you'd better stick a copybook down your bags."

" But he'll *know* it's the first of April!" objected Weeks. Dash it! The man can't be so bally beaky as——"

" Well, try it!" said Speke significantly. " And after hearing your scheme I'll double the odds with pleasure. Two to one against in bobs. You can spend the odd shilling on Zam-buk."

These words made Weeks thoughtful. In the first flush of creation, his idea had seemed simply peerless. Even now, the notion appeared to him one of the ideas of the century, a priceless inspiration that it would be a sin to waste. Weeks had a humorous twist in his composition that made him lick his lips in anticipation of the score—the originator of a tale to be handed down as a tradition for future generations. " Yes," he could envisage himself saying to a succession of ear-strained audiences throughout the years: " I once called the Bat a cad to his face. Did it for a bet. It was like this——" As he reflected on these potentialities Weeks grinned in prospective triumph. Like the butcher in the poem, he could have quoted:

" The thing can be done," said the Butcher,
" I think:
The thing must be done, I am sure!
The thing *shall* be done! Bring me paper
and ink—
The best there is time to procure."

Oh, yes! despite the gloomy prophecies of Speke, the affair *must* be carried through! At the worst it could only mean a licking for mistimed humour; and even a licking would be a small price to pay for such a princely occasion of boasting. But one might as well (just for the form of the thing) not neglect the hint about the copybook.

And so to muse and hug himself for a space, and reflect upon his own unexampled genius. And there would be a couple of bobs to lay out in the tuckshop presently. Let's see—what about a little feed in the dorm on Saturday night to celebrate the event? For two bob one might indulge in marzipan, Swiss biscuits, nougat—— That night Weeks fell asleep with a smile of triumph and anticipated feasting. The thing was easy money, and all his own work. Undoubtedly he was It with a capital I.

Now, it is not an uncommon experience with authors to hit on a happy idea for a story when they are in bed. In the silence and the darkness the brain works smoothly, and the brilliant possibilities of the New Idea shine forth with dazzling clearness. The author switches on the electric glow (or lights a penny dip, as the case may be) and jots down a note, lest he

forget when morning comes. Then he curls up happily to sleep, foreseeing a good story and a fat cheque. But in the cold light of morning the Idea, more often than not, seems to have suffered a sea-change. Its humorous possibilities have evaporated: the plot is old or impossible: the whole thing appears too dull for words. How on earth could it have seemed so brilliant the night before? As with the author, so it was with Weeks. When he reviewed his scheme the next day, the flush of inspiration had passed, but the copybook hint remained. He dwelt upon this and other possibilities unpleasantly at intervals throughout the day. The more he thought, the less he liked it. Doubtless, the morrow *was* the first of April, but prudent reflection emphasized the sourness of Ormond's temper and the proximity of canes. On the whole, had he not been rather an ass to enter upon the scheme so lightly? The Ayes had it, and Weeks did not demand a scrutiny.

Two things held him to his purpose. The first was a stout heart—he hated to eat his own words—and the second was the nearness of the date. If April first had been deferred for a week, the adventure would have been called off, for Weeks would not have survived seven days' musings on reprisals. As it happened, All Fools' Day was on the morrow, so he had only the one day for indecision and regrets. When Weeks arose slowly on April first, he was more than half inclined to throw in his hand, but a chance remark from Speke restored his flagging courage.

"Shall I collect that bob now or after brekker?" queried Speke casually as they dressed. The implied sneer stiffened the regretful hero.

"You can pay me the two during interval," he replied, with a Stoic's smile. "And see you've got the cash ready."

"The banks don't open till ten," returned Speke mildly. "But you'll get it before dinner—if you earn it."

Weeks disdained further argument, and in due course went down to breakfast. Observers noted that the condemned man made a hearty meal of bacon and e—as you were!—of porridge, bread-and-butter, and a sausage. Kindly souls urged him to coax another "sossy-wag" out of the matron, to build up his strength for the coming ordeal. Weeks smiled wanly at the *mal à propos* remarks, but continued to stoke heavily with bread-and-butter. At last breakfast was over, and he left the room to moon about the corridor until his house-master should come that way. The Bat's routine was nearly as regular as clockwork. Invariably he emerged from his study at ten minutes to eight and went into the dining-room for breakfast. It was Weeks's plan to meet him half-way down the corridor after he had finished that meal and was returning. Then, encountering the fed and (perhaps) good-tempered brute, he would get off his little wheeze and retire with the honours of war. Or perhaps—but no! There was no need to dwell at present on that alternative.

The minutes hung like lead, and his wheeze seemed painfully little as the practical joker waited in the passage. The Bat had been in the dining-room before he left—at the porridge stage, to be exact. Surely this morning he was lingering unduly over the accursed meal? Was the bacon more tasty than usual? Or had an egg been condemned as unfit for human consumption and a fresh one ordered to be boiled? If only the beggar would come out and get it over! It was this rotten waiting that was so distinctly unnerving—so absolutely rotten. And why were there about a million grinning apes peering round the lower study door, eager to witness the encounter? The

"Wh—what's that!" he snarled, his hand shaking

asses would give the thing away. Feverishly the doomed Weeks beckoned them to keep in hiding and give him at least a chance for life. They retired, only to reappear in greater numbers a moment later. His heart pounding like an engine, his hands clammy with the dews of death, his brow perspiring gently, Weeks waited—resolute, but despairing, and wondered if the sun had stopped or if he was dwelling in a dream.

Mr. Ormond appeared at last, and, as he came, the watchers vanished like magic to their lairs. With a gulp Weeks lurched forward to meet his fate. Half-way down the corridor the pair met, and the inventor summoned all his courage.

"M-m-morning, sir!" he stuttered, and then stuck.

It was unusual—nay, unprecedented—for a fag to wish his house-master "good morning", and the Bat stopped in sheer surprise. As ill-luck would have it, Mr. Ormond had had a bad night (he suffered from liver) and was peculiarly grumpy that morning.

"Morning!" he snapped ungraciously. "D'you want to speak to me?"

His gimlet eye pierced the audacious well-wisher. The gathering frown and hard features struck terror into the soul of Weeks. Recollection of past and painful interviews crowded thick upon him. To do him justice, he meant to fulfil the contract and make good his boast; but, after his recent brain-storm and beneath his master's eye, he lost his head completely and simply babbled.

"F-f-first of April, sir!" he crowed vacantly, mixing his cues. The Bat glowered ominously.

"It is!" he snapped crisply. "If you had any notion of ill-timed jesting on the subject, I should advise you to restrain your levity. Now, be off!"

Not a kick left in him, the bemused joker slunk along the corridor, while the Bat swept off to his study. Weeks's compeers received him with mingled laughs and sneers.

"What happened, old man?" asked Speke, with obtrusive sympathy. "Got the palsy or just a sudden attack of heart disease?"

"All very well for you to gas," snarled Weeks resentfully. "If you'd seen the Bat's eye you'd have done the same. Jolly easy for you to talk and gas and——"

"And collect a bob. Ye-es. I thought two to one was easy odds. Got it on you?"

Weeks handed over a shilling with surly gloom.

"Beastly rotten!" he chanted. "You gas and gas and GAS, but you'd never dare to try yourself. At least I had a shot——"

"Daresay you're feeling ratty," smiled Speke. "But what will you *bet* that I don't pull it off?"

"A million to one!" growled Weeks.

"Talk sense. The odds ought to lengthen now. Will you give me four to one I don't call Bat a cad, by word of mouth?"

"Rather!" gasped Weeks.

"All right," said Speke nonchalantly. "I'll take it on. Four to one against my calling Bat a cad—by word of mouth. Got me?"

"Yes," said Weeks grimly. "Within a week, of course."

"I'll do it to-day," said Speke calmly; and then the bell went for school.

II

Mid-way in the morning came the quarter-hour interval, and at that time of refreshing Weeks sought to allay his curiosity.

"How are you going to work it?" he asked, as Speke cheerfully absorbed a bun and a glass of milk.

"That's my secret," said Speke mysteri-

ously. " Take it from me, I *shall* work it, and I shan't be spotted. But, if you want to be satisfied that I've won the four bob, you must do something."

" What?"

" Get yourself turned by the Bat for rep."

" But that's not in the contract."

" I know, and it won't affect my pulling it off. But, if you want to be sure I've won —and if you want to see a bit of fun—you'll get turned."

" What for, you ass?"

" I shan't tell you now. But you can bet your boots it will be worth it. All you've got to do is to be turned. Then you'll join the usual little lot of fellows who appear at 12.30 precisely in Bat's study to say their rep. And you must arrange to be in the study at 12.35. I shall work by the clock, and at that very minute I shall call the Bat a cad."

" What! in the man's *study*? Where he keeps his canes?"

" You'll hear me," said Speke calmly. " Now you know what to do. If you like to miss the fun, you can. If not, be in Bat's study at 12.35 sharp, and you'll enjoy yourself."

No more could be extracted from the mysterious Speke. Consumed with curiosity, Weeks pondered the problem. Was it worth while getting turned for his rep. for a problematical pantomime? In the end he decided it was, for, if Speke proved a man of his word, there ought to be fireworks with a capital F. The actual carrying out of the programme was an easy matter. Every day all luckless creatures who failed to satisfy Mr. Ormond with their morning tasks had to stay in from noon to 12.30, to learn them again. At the half-hour they repaired to the Bat's study to say or show the result of their extra efforts. As for the " turning ", that was anything but difficult. Weeks's usual problem was how to avoid detention. Hence, when Weeks was put on to repeat Mark Antony's speech, it was no surprise to the Bat or his fellow-sufferers when he halted at the second line. He was prompted by the master and resumed. Again he halted, and again came the prompting voice—more churlish this time. The third prompt was in a menacing tone; and when Weeks came to a dead stop a moment later, the wished-for sentence was pronounced.

" Wretched—as usual! Learn it again after school, and say it to me in my study at 12.30."

Weeks sat down in apparent shame, but with a pardonable pride. He knew the rep. thoroughly, for a wonder, and the extra effort at 12.30 would be merely nominal. When the end of the morning came he asked for Speke's applause.

" Did it pretty well, didn't I?" he queried. " Now, mind you don't let me down and waste it all."

" I shan't let you down," returned Speke cheerily. " Now, ta-ta! Don't forget the appointment!"

" Rather not! Where are you off to?"

" Just a stroll to the village," smiled Speke, and left Weeks consumed with doubt as to whether his leg was being pulled or not.

The half-hour's wait in the classroom passed slowly, but the end came at last. Three minutes before 12.30 Weeks picked up his rep. book and went across to the house. Outside the Bat's door he saw a dozen or so other fellows in similar plight, waiting for the stroke of the chimes. As the Abbey bell clanged, the leader of the throng knocked on the study door.

" Come in!" said the austere voice of the Bat, and the little procession entered. Once inside, the familiar routine was observed. The unfortunates ranged themselves in line,

books in hand, and waited for their turns to be heard. Weeks had carefully placed himself near the end, lest he might be heard too soon and sent out. As the first boy was called up, he scanned his surroundings carefully. Speke was not among the throng. Could he be hidden somewhere behind a curtain or under a table? Was he secreted up the chimney, ready to bellow "You're a cad!" at the appointed hour? The window was shut: surely he did not mean to fling it up from the outside and shout his pæan and then fly? Impossible! yet—where was he? Weeks's heart grew faint with disappointment: it looked like a leg-pulling after all. Perhaps he would knock at the door, come in, and brave the fates in open court! If he did—but no! The thing *could* not happen like that. In a tempest of doubt, Weeks heard the first boy stumble through his task, and the second called up. He too came and passed. A third followed. In the middle of the fourth task, light was vouchsafed.

Mr. Ormond was running over an amended copy of Latin verses, when the telephone bell on his desk suddenly rang. He picked it up mechanically.

"Yes," he said, "this is Mr. Ormond speaking. Who is it? . . . Mr. Horton? I don't know— Hello! . . . *What's that?* . . . *What* do you say? . . . You—you impertinent hound——"

Full of wonder, the detained creatures watched the features of the Bat suddenly crimson with wrath. His cheeks puffed out—the veins in his neck swelled with suppressed emotion — he stammered — he spluttered with incoherent and baffled impotence. "*Wh-what's* that?" he snarled, his hand shaking. "*What* do you say? Who *are* you? I demand to know who is speaking! Answer me, sir! Answer me at once!"

In the midst of his babbling Weeks decided on two things, (1) that Speke was a genius, and (2) that it was a cheap four bobs' worth. After a minute's furious vituperation and vain questions, Mr. Ormond flung down the unresponsive instrument with an execration. Often had his pupils seen him in anger, but never in quite so priceless a tan as now. With excusable wrath he dismissed the waiting *détenus* from the study, and sat down to think the matter out.

After dinner Weeks proffered the earned increment and his congratulations.

"Old man!" he said admiringly, "it was peerless! What did you say, and how did you do it?"

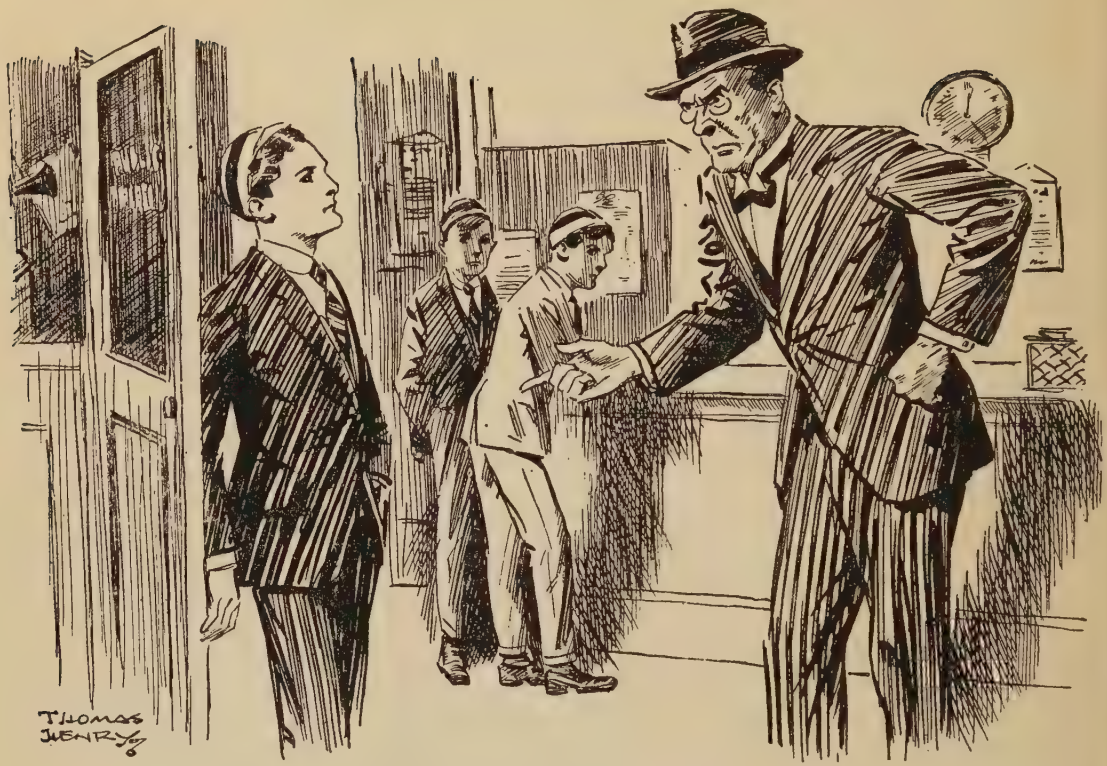
"Called him a cad, as per contract, with a few additions," said Speke calmly. "I spoke in a sort of high falsetto so that he wouldn't spot my voice. I just went into the village post office and rang up as usual. Easy money. He *can't* spot it anyhow, so far as I can see. We've got him on toast."

"But if he *does* spot it——"

"How *can* he? The call-office doesn't know—it can't know. Every day there's scores of chaps go in to Mother Barton's to buy grub and what not. Mother Barton isn't likely to note who 'phoned. Besides, she doesn't know a tenth of the fellows who come in. How *could* she in a school of six hundred chaps? My good ass, the thing's *easy*. So now, whenever you want to get some of your own back, all you've got to do is to go down to the village and ring up the Bat's number."

"I wonder!" said Weeks, licking his lips. "I've often wanted to tell the brute what I really think of him. It seems too good to be true! Dash it! There *must* be a catch somewhere!"

Speke smiled wearily, compassionating the dullness of men's minds. He was pleased with his idea, great and simple as it was, and he had no intention of letting



"Whom were you calling up?"

the thing stop there. For, like a good many other luckless beings, he had long been "fed up" with the irate injustices of the Bat. And now a way was clear to get some of his own back without undue risk. Yes—decidedly it must be followed up in due course.

Mr. Ormond thought the same. After musing awhile in impotent anger, he took his troubles to the Chief, who heard his tale thoughtfully.

"Yes," he agreed. "Obviously some boy must have been guilty. The trouble is, how can he be detected? How can we stamp on it?"

"Gate the whole school till we find out!" suggested the Bat. The Chief shook his head.

"That wouldn't be quite fair. To punish six hundred boys for the fault of one—no! For the present I think we'd better let it lie. I hope it won't be repeated. If it *is*, well, the culprit may give himself away, and then we can deal with him. I'll have a word with Mrs. Barton and tell her to keep her eyes open. But I doubt if that will do much good. However, we'll wait and see."

With that Mr. Ormond had to be content, but he promised himself a royal revenge if ever it came his way. For a week he meditated schemes of detection and reprisal without result, and for a week all was quiet. This, of malice aforethought. Speke was no fool, and he guessed that, though all seemed serene, the authorities would be

quietly on the alert. So he carefully avoided the village and the post office and bided his time. The post office was the only telephone (bar a few private houses) in the village, and in addition to its Governmental duties it sold general " notions " and grub to the school at large. Between twelve and one and after afternoon school it was crowded with a seething mob. Old Mother Barton, assisted by a girl of fifteen, was too venerable and short-sighted to be an ideal detective. But, seeing that it was the only public call-office, there was a chance of an irate beak (like the Bat) doing a bit of detective work on his own. Hence, caution must be observed.

At the end of a week Speke decided that a repetition of guerilla tactics might safely be employed. Once more he 'phoned candid opinions to his house-master, and again he pulled it off. The Bat foamed in secret, again consulted the Chief, who looked grave but still advised a waiting policy. Disgusted, Mr. Ormond decided to take matters into his own hands. He would see Mother Barton again on the morrow and arrange with her to secrete him daily somewhere in the shop, where he could keep a watch on all who entered. His blood was up. Not lightly would he allow himself to be insulted. If necessary he would watch daily between twelve and one —and later if need be—until he had probed the mystery.

He put his plan into action the next day. Directly school was over he walked briskly down to the village, meaning to interview Mother Barton. Speke, who now took careful note of his mentor's movements, saw him go, and wondered what his plan could be. He shadowed the misguided man, if one can call it shadowing, for the road to the village was dotted with boys from the school on their usual tramp, and among these Speke made no conspicuous figure. When he saw the Bat disappear into the post office, Speke smiled thoughtfully. Obviously something was up. Obviously he must walk warily. Obviously—— Another idea struck him, and he smiled again. With a resolute step Speke walked into the shop. There was a number of boys inside, but no sign of Mr. Ormond. He, as a matter of fact, was closeted within, talking things over with Mother Barton. Speke thought he might be hidden somewhere, but in this he was wrong. However, if didn't matter. Quietly the conspirator opened the little glass-doored call-box, consulted the directory, and rang up.

As the bell tinkled, Mr. Ormond sprang to his feet. If only that meant that the villain was at it again! Brushing aside concealment, he left the recesses of Mother Barton's cottage and stalked into the shop. Through the glass door he saw Speke 'phoning. For a moment Bat watched him. Then, as Speke finished, he stepped forward. The door opened.

" Whom were you calling up?" he asked grimly.

" The san., sir," said Speke mildly. " Rogers went there with 'flu yesterday, and I was asking how he was."

The Bat was quick-witted enough to know that he must not appear to doubt. This *might* be the culprit, or it might not! A premature step would give the game away. The san. was out of bounds, and it had a 'phone. It might be genuine—anyhow, it could be tested later.

" Very well," he said mechanically, and walked away. Later in the day he confirmed Speke's words. The san. matron telephoned corroboration. So the Bat bit his finger-nails and wondered if by any chance Speke might be the guilty person. Hitherto he had seemed a fairly decent youth—but one never knew.

During the next few weeks Mr. Ormond

had a disturbing time. He played the detective for ten days, and nothing happened, for Speke watched him like a hawk. On the eleventh day he thought he might have a rest, and make up some arrears of detention. And during that unlucky half-hour he was rung up and informed of his deficiencies. It was maddening! The Chief frowned when he heard: obviously somebody had a plan of campaign, but it would hardly do to punish the whole school—yet, anyhow. Still, something must be done. So he put the telephone (not the grub-shop) out of bounds. To enforce his prohibition a monitor was put on duty in Mother Barton's during the time when it was legal to enter the village. This step was not popular with the monitors; but on being informed that the alternative must be a big collective " gating " they made the best of a bad business.

" But if we can catch the joker, he'll get it in the neck!" was their irate verdict. Luckily, Speke had sworn his pals to secrecy, and no one above the Third knew the author of the outrage.

The Chief's tactics piqued the pride of Speke. His guns had been spiked, and he disliked being beaten. But, being a cautious youth, he recognized the folly of attempting anything at present while pursuit was keen. None the less he meditated on possibilities. And a day came when fortune favoured him in his nefarious work. About a fortnight after the ban had been pronounced he saw a sight that was not frequent, but still not unfamiliar—the Chief in a top-hat and carrying a suit-case. That meant a run up to town on business and back the next day. Here was the opportunity for his meditation to bear fruit. Without a word to anyone Speke disinterred a hundred " lines " he had in stock and walked over to the School House. The impot in his hand, as an excuse for calling, he entered the Chief's wing and knocked (as a score of boys did daily) upon the Chief's door. No answer! No butler or servant said " Come in!"—no menial footsteps sounded close. The Chief was a bachelor—no fear of prying wife or kids—all serene! After waiting a moment to make assurance doubly sure, Speke entered and closed the door behind him quietly. Then, with swift resolution, he crossed to the Chief's desk, and, with a seraphic smile, lifted the 'phone receiver.

" 48 A Clavering," he said.

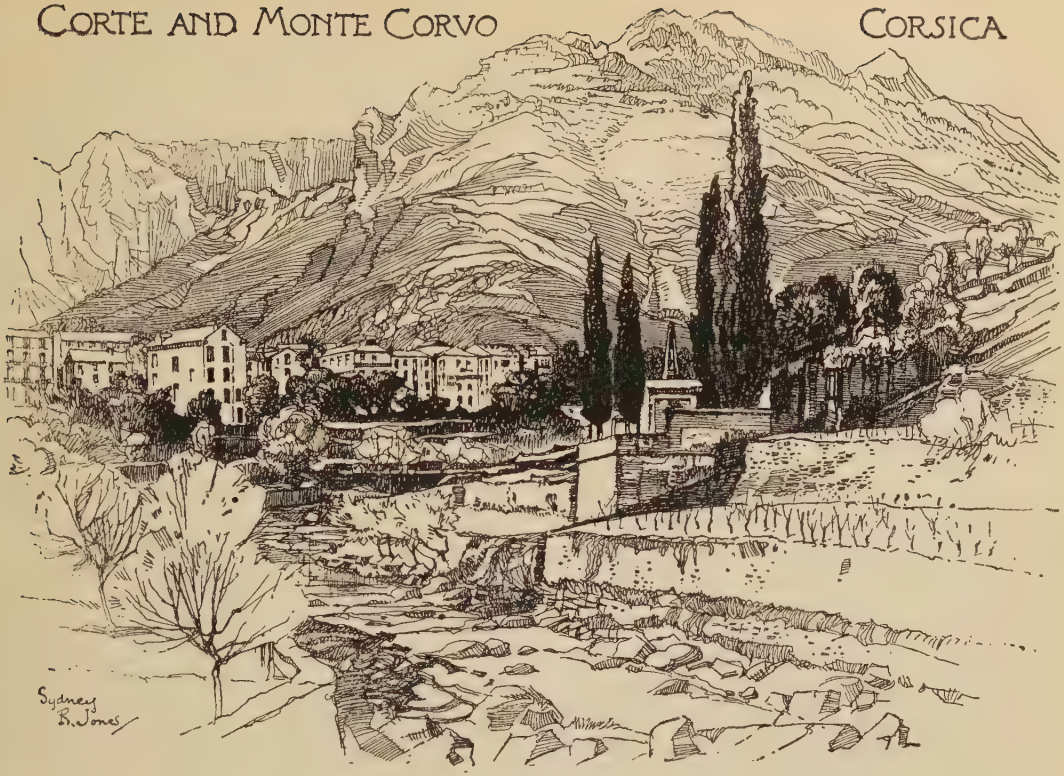
He left the room unobserved a moment later and mingled with the crowd.

. . . . . .

But there is a limit. Next day the Chief made a brief speech in Big School.

" Some boy has been telephoning impertinences to a master. I dislike to punish the school for the fault of one; but this cannot go on. If it occurs again, the term will be lengthened by a week. I hope it will not prove necessary."

It did not. Speke retired from business, feeling that at least one unjust judge had been faithfully dealt with.



On a Corsican Farm

By Jim Pennant

If anyone should ask you what you know about the Island of Corsica, don't be alarmed. Just mutter something about Napoleon's birthplace and hordes of bandits and it's ten to one you'll emerge from the ordeal with flying colours, for nobody will be able to improve on your information off-hand. If you can throw in a word about eucalyptus trees so much the better, but it isn't safe to go much further or you'll be taunted with having " got it up " from an encyclopædia. Assuming then that you are no better informed than most Britishers, I may as well say that Corsica is about 114 miles long by 54 at its broadest part, that it is a hilly place for the most part, and that its population is just under two hundred thousand persons.

It so happened that I got my first experience of the island under perfectly ideal conditions, but I spent a long enough time upon it to learn its disadvantages; in spite of which it still appears to me as an almost perfect spot. (By the way, don't let anyone fool you that *any* place is perfect; no place is.) From Bastia, where I landed in glorious sunshine that showed up the houses, churches, gardens, and wooded hills, the

harbour and the rocky coastline, like a fairy picture, I went straight out to the farm, nine miles distant, where I was to be located. After a tour of inspection there was just time to drive up to the village of Borgo, in which I intended to lodge during the hot months of July, August, and September. In Borgo I was introduced to the proprietrix of the one and only hotel, which boasted one solitary guest-chamber. As Madame A—— spoke no French and I no Corsican, the arrangement come to was a trifle vague—something about ninety francs was prominent in it, but whether she meant that sum per day or per week, and what it included, I couldn't make out. However, I nodded and waved my hands, which turned out all right, as the mysterious figure proved to be the cost of the guest-chamber plus *petit déjeuner*, an ample lunch-basket, and evening dinner for one month, attendance thrown in. Tips came to twenty francs and were considered handsome.

After dinner I was presented to the village notables. By the time this ceremony was over I was noticeably expert in expressing my high opinion of the island. I did it at least fifty times, and always in the same words, before local sentiment was satisfied, but it was a little trying in the early forties, somehow.

In October, life at the farm really began. By that time the hay harvest was long since in, the season's wine was fermenting in the " caves " or cellars, and the time for shipping oranges, mandarines, and lemons approached. The almond crop too was dry and ready for sale, and contracts for pasturing sheep on the lucerne fixed up.

Shepherds are a prominent feature of the " plains " in winter. During that season the sheep leave the mountains and are pastured on the land from which lucerne or alfalfa has been cut in June and July and is again sprouting vigorously. Each shepherd tends a flock, usually about two hundred animals, all day long. (In most cases the sheep are his own property, by the way.) From the time they are milked in the early morning and turned out to graze, their master slowly follows his charges, and directs their movements by shrill whistling. One shriek is enough to turn the whole group, which obeys *en masse*. In fine weather the shepherd carries an enormous umbrella under one arm; during rain he tramps for hours through the wet grass, a long cape of goat-hair felt over his shoulders and his umbrella overhead. From time to time he refreshes himself with a gulp of wine from a gourd slung over one shoulder, but he very rarely seeks shelter of any kind. (All Corsican peasants, by the by, when out of doors drink by throwing the head back and allowing their refreshment to trickle into their mouths from gourd or bottle held several inches above their heads. A splendid plan when several persons have to drink from one bottle, but a very difficult trick to learn, as you'll find if you try it!) From the milk of Corsican sheep much of the famous Roquefort cheese is made. The finished article is " ripened " in the great caves for which Roquefort is famous, but much of it originates in Corsica.

After watching the shepherds at their work—they almost never read and have few opportunities for conversation — one might suppose them as stupid as their sheep. Not at all! They have lots of natural shrewdness when business is in question. The Continental cheese-makers buy milk on its specific gravity or " richness ", but it didn't take the guileless shepherds long to find out that a handful of salt has a big influence on a *pèse-lait* (an adaptation of the hydrometer), and that salt water at 8*d.* a quart is good business!

In the open air the Corsican shepherd is

by way of being a picturesque figure, but indoors he is distinctly no catch. To him, in most cases, washing is a needless formality, bathing a form of insanity, and I have been told that many of his class never change their clothes during the six months or so of their stay on the plains. In spite of these little drawbacks, however, they are a robust and healthy lot, as a rule.

Bandits are still to be met with on the island, but they must not be confused with robbers. The real ones are men who have used knife or revolver too freely in a quarrel and consequently are wanted by the police, as well as by the friends of the man who wasn't quick enough. They then take to the maquix or scrub, where they find food and drink left for them by friends, and are almost perfectly safe from their enemies. They frequently visit private houses whose owners would not in any case accept payment for a meal and a bottle of wine, while at a place of public entertainment (usually a lonely wayside inn) it is customary for them to " pay " for what they eat and drink. The bandit tenders, say, a five-franc note, which mine host accepts with a bow. After a short delay mine host returns five francs in silver as " change ", which the bandit in his turn accepts with a bow. Such pleasing formalities make a bandit's life worth living! It is quite a mistake to suppose that one is always liable to be " held up " by these outlaws. They exact tribute in some cases, but they do not rob indiscriminately, and are usually willing to mind their own business if not interfered with. Of course, if one annoys them, well—!

As I have said, they are objects of great interest to the police, but it is rarely that the law comes to grips with the real article. More often it is the bandit who, annoyed by police activity, takes a pot-shot at the man in uniform from a quiet spot in the maquix. Sometimes it comes off, but more often it doesn't. You can easily understand, however, that as the police are always mounted and in uniform (and visible about three miles off), while the bandit is on foot and quite hidden by dense scrub, the outlaw has much the better of the hide-and-seek game.

Work on a Corsican farm is very varied —some easy, some very hard—but that of threshing grain is perhaps the hardest and, to a man from the North, the most novel. It is very unusual for a " patron " to do any manual labour, which is not at all " the thing ", but an acute difficulty in securing workers compelled me to do many humble tasks for myself. Among these was threshing, at which I often lent a hand. For this process, the sheaves are first stood on end, grain upwards, on a large circle of prepared ground (the grass burned off it and the ashes swept away). On to the platform, as it were, so formed is driven a pair, or even two pairs, of oxen, from the yoke across whose necks hangs a chain attached to a ponderous stone. The worker then grasps a long pair of rope reins, takes up his position behind the beasts, well out of the stone's way, and starts work. At the first step an ox gets, say, a forefoot right down to earth through the still upright sheaves, and naturally plunges forward. As he recovers himself he jerks the reins violently. It is ten to one that as he does so the driver steps between two sheaves, also gets a foot on the ground, and is wrenched forward on his face, to the vast amusement of the onlookers. In such circumstances it is much pleasanter to let go than to hang on, but there is the job of overtaking the animals afterwards, which is not easy and provides more amusement. After a round or two, however, the sheaves become set in one direction and things go more smoothly, but it is never easy work. When two pairs

of oxen are used it is quite a problem how to escape the wildly moving stone at one's feet and at the same time keep out of the way of the oxen coming on behind. Very soon too dust rises in clouds, and this, coupled with the sun's burning heat and the irregular foothold, makes decidedly " dirty weather " for a new hand. It's a long half-hour till one gets a rest! The work of threshing is continued, after the circle of sheaves has become a mere heap of loose grain and broken straw, by the use of wooden forks, with which the mixture is tossed into the air. Chaff, &c., is carried to one side by the wind, while the grain falls straight down. The finer dust and debris are then got rid of by a fanner worked by a crank-handle, after which the grain is ready for sale.

Hay-making is another great job which gets at one's weak spots. Like threshing it is conducted under a broiling sun, and, though the guiding of a mower isn't light work, loading is " the dickens ". I don't know whether it is better to fork the stuff up, which is deadly hard work when the cart is only *half* loaded, or to arrange it on the cart. In the latter case one has the responsibility for correct loading, with the penalty of falling from no small height and being simply engulfed should one not succeed. And if a patron undertakes manual work in Corsica he *must* succeed. (While on the subject of hard exertion during summer on any part of the Mediterranean coast, I may as well advise my readers to wear a " ceinture " *always*. This is simply a long belt of thin flannel or serge, 3 to 4 yards, wound tightly about one's waist. It may not be very comfortable for the first day, but it is invaluable in preventing chills —and only a fool will risk a chill in a hot climate.)

Hay-making and baling and the tedious work of threshing are, however, mere incidents in the life of a Corsican farmer—and incidents in which no true-blue local gentleman would dream of taking part. That I did goes for nothing; it was only natural that I should astonish the natives, who have a way of explaining the weird doings of Englishmen by saying: " Ou fou ou Anglais." If one is caught doing any work of serious usefulness one's reputation for sanity suffers instantly. My foreman was often on the verge of tears over my shortcomings, and it was only when he took to tapping his forehead significantly when questioned that he reconciled himself to the position. He himself understood me later on, but to his countrymen I always remained a mysterious and uncanny phenomenon.

Quite the pleasantest work one can do on the island is gathering and packing oranges and mandarines. This is done in the bright, genial days of winter when the climate is at its best, as far as comfort is concerned. In a good season the trees are laden with golden-yellow fruit, easy to pick, and convenient to pack, and as the crop does not all ripen at once the harvest sometimes lasts six weeks or even longer. These fruits are always cut from the trees, and with mandarines especially it is usual to cut a leaf or two also, as these make a nice appearance when the stuff is marketed at Nice or Marseilles, and also serve as packing. During a season scores of dozens of mandarines may be taken from a tree whose highest branch can be reached from a small pair of steps. Another popular fruit is the cédrat, familiar to us in cakes as lemon peel. It is a hard, tough affair, much like a very big lemon, but quite uneatable until boiled. It is cut into two or four parts and packed in huge barrels into which ordinary seawater is then poured. In this form it goes to London or New York, where it is, I understand, boiled in syrup, after which

it is ready for sale. Like the orange, lemon, and mandarine trees, the cédratier must be watered fortnightly during June, July, and August, For this, a small stream or reservoir is needed. From the most convenient point at which water can be got a shallow groove is cut, into which the streamlet is directed. When the trees are reached the worker breaks into his tiny canal, stopping it in one place, opening it in another, until each plant in turn is surrounded by a patch of moist earth. One would naturally expect that bone-dry earth would suck in any water which comes its way, but after a summer in Corsica the soil is baked so hard that very little water penetrates it, and the trickling rivulet may be made to flow eighty or one hundred yards without diminishing. About the trees, however, the soil has been well dug in trench form and is protected by a covering of manure and dry grass, which prevents it from becoming hard and also prevents evaporation of the precious water. One small cédrat plantation will support an entire family, by the way, and I have even heard of a man whose sole income is got from three immense trees. I fancy *he* is a man of modest tastes, however, even for Corsica.

It is impossible to touch upon all the things at which one works on the island—they are much more numerous than the things at which one plays. Still I have seen amateurs take a nice thirty trout from the Golo in a day, while the local professionals can secure twenty in an hour under favourable conditions. When I tried angling myself, however, the catch was one small fish between two of us—and the other fellow got it! I went fish-spearing on the lagoon several times, though, and had good sport, landing several fish up to five pounds each, besides eels, which one gets in punting along with the spear. The system cannot be described in detail here, but as far as eels are concerned it is simply a case of spearing the mud a trifle deeper than is required for mere progression. From time to time one looks at the spear and dumps an eel or two into the boat. They come three at a time or one in a whole morning—sheer luck!

Shooting is the most common form of sport. Every Corsican owns a gun, even if it's only a muzzle-loader fired by a cap. (These are still much in use, and fearful things they look, by the way.) A wild pig battue is the best of all shoots, and is carried out by from six to twelve "guns". These are placed at various points, while the game is roused by a couple of shepherds and their dogs. Each gun commands a goat path through the dense scrub, while the beaters start work at the foot of a glen and work up. If there is a pig in the neighbourhood he legs it in a hurry, is glimpsed for a moment by some lucky sportsman, and landed at the first shot, or is past like lightning and safe for that day. It isn't easy to be sure of one's aim at a big boar bearing down full pelt when it's quite on the cards he'll run straight over you and have a nip at your leg in passing, if you miss! Good shooting can be got now and then at partridges and woodcock, an odd hare, and at quail, but the great thickness of the maquix is a big drawback, and pigs remain the quarry par excellence. In England no sportsman would dream of shooting a blackbird, but in Corsica he is fair game. He is a migrant and comes to the island, not to sing but to gorge on the berries with which the maquix abounds, till he is plump enough for the roasting-skewer or that famous dish known as *pâté-de-merle*. Epicures value him highly—and not without reason!

Among the undesirables are small snakes—harmless things from two to four feet long, but apt to be startling when one of

them darts out from a flower-bed or a clump of grass. Curiously enough, these creatures are most surely killed by a stroke from an ordinary carter's whip brought smartly to the ground across their backs. Like most other people Corsicans will seldom touch them, but I have known two or three peasants who prided themselves on the neatness with which they could catch a snake by its tail and, whirling it sharply over, kill it by a blow against the ground. My foreman and his eldest son would not have done this under any circumstances, but I have often seen each of them seize a full-grown rat from a corn-sack or fruit-case and dash it to the ground quite unconcernedly. As a real test of nerve in a small way, however, I think the putting of one's naked hand into a rat-haunted wall and following it up with an entire arm, on the chance of finding a rat at home, is hard to beat. The two workmen just mentioned thought nothing of doing so, and woe betide the rat they lighted on!

Taking them all over, the Corsicans are a very decent set of people, and are extremely hospitable to strangers who don't put on side. Of course, as their island is just about the last word in scenery and can turn out a dozen or so climates to suit all tastes, winter and summer, they expect visitors to appreciate it. If you can say you really like their wine (which is usually first-rate) and one or two of their national dishes, such as *figadeli* and *broccio*, you'll get along swimmingly. *Figadeli* are a sort of pork sausage done up with spices and white wine—rather an acquired taste, and *broccio* is a curdy cheese which you'll probably enjoy immensely. It is eaten with plain bread or supped with sugar, just as one fancies. It appears as a sweetmeat done up with chocolate; it disguises itself as stuffing for sweet cakes eaten hot, and doesn't mind posing as force-meat in stewed artichokes. Old hands sometimes sprinkle it with *eau-de-vie* (which I do *not* recommend) and children like it with stewed fruit. Take your choice, but don't blame me!

Leaving work and play aside, the island is a beautiful place for a motor or cycle tour. The Cap Corse district is wild and grand; the forests of the Niolo are fine beyond description, and everywhere the intelligent visitor will find something worth seeing.

Indeed, it is hardly fair to the island to close this short article without enumerating some of its "show" places, though they can't really be brought under the title I have chosen. Men who like climbing will be taken with the idea of seeing the view from the top of Monte Rotondo, which is fully 9000 feet high, and which has a tiny lake right on its summit. This is an excursion I have not made, but it is a "star turn" which I have heard more than one enthusiast rave about. A large part of the ascent is made, or can be made, on mule-back, and the route is an exceptionally fine one.

Corte is the third most important town in the island, and was at one time the capital. It is beautifully situated in a great valley, and is worth a visit on that account, as well as because of the difference between it and its two rivals, Bastia and Ajaccio. Here the famous patriot Pasquale Paoli had his head-quarters more than once during his desperate fight for Corsican independence, and here James Boswell, Dr. Johnson's friend, met the revolutionary committee (who had serious thoughts of shooting him off-hand, I fully believe, though Bozzy doesn't seem to have guessed it).

St. Florent is a pleasant little town nicely situated on the coast within a comfortable drive of Bastia, and Île Rousse, though a poor enough place, is remarkable for the peculiar redness of its cliffs, which show up

quite remarkably in certain conditions of weather. Sartène, inland, is a survival from patriarchal times, and quite unique in its way, even in Corsica, while Bonifaccio is perhaps the quaintest place of all. Very unfortunately it is not easily got at, except by motor-car, but its extraordinary jumble of narrow streets is well worth a visit.

I have already mentioned the forest of the Niolo. The district of this name is one of the most charming to be found in the interior, but it again is not to be reached easily by train. One leaves the railway at Francardo and from there proceeds by diligence, or other conveyance, to Albertacce, some fifteen miles off. This is a beautiful walk, but it is apt to be tiring if undertaken in summer. For one thing, the road is almost all uphill and is covered by dust ankle-deep. The uplands of the Niolo, however, amply repay any discomfort experienced in reaching them, and the following day's excursion to the forest is apt to be memorable. A wind seems to blow continually there—a cool breeze infinitely refreshing—which passes over the forest of great pines with a roar as of surf on a lee-shore.

All the places mentioned can readily and comfortably be seen with the help of a motor-car, but the slower method of employing local cabriolets—or carts at a pinch, not to mention one's legs—is perhaps more romantic, and is equally efficient if time permits. For a tour it is well to consult someone who knows the island thoroughly, and visitors can't do better than ask a hint or two from the British vice-consul at Bastia. A pleasant variation from progress by motor, bicycle, cabriolet, mule-cart, or on foot is to be got by taking advantage of the coastal service by Fraissinet et Cie., whose steamers offer fair facilities to tourists who prefer sea-travel. This method is, of course, unsurpassed as a means of seeing the island coast at comparatively close quarters, while at the same time seeing all of it. Indeed, it is probable that a combination of coastal sailing with cycling or motoring from such ports as Bastia, Ajaccio, and Île Rousse provides not only an ideal holiday but by far the best possible opportunity of becoming really acquainted with Corsica in a short time. But as I have said, much must be left for decision till the visitor is actually ashore and able to judge of the facilities at his disposal. I am presuming that Corsica is a *terra incognita* to most readers. If this is so, the task of arranging a tour will be in itself a keen pleasure rather than a "bore" to most people who find themselves called upon to perform it. Of course all the things I've mentioned cannot be seen at any season of the year, but any time between early October and the end of April is top-hole for a visit, as a general rule. The weather then is cool without being cold, and is miles ahead of what one often gets at Nice or Cannes. Altogether, you'll find the island well worth a visit if you can pull it off. And take a camera with you, of course!

Exit Dave Mulloon

A Stirring Tale of the English Coast

By Alfred Judd

"I'm going ashore now, Macey."

"Alone, sir?"

"Yes. I don't expect I shall be away long, but don't wait about for me. Good night!"

Saying which, Captain Harcourt stepped over the yacht's side, and into a white pinnace that waited below. A motor began to throb, and the pinnace, churning out, was soon lost in darkness.

Macey—the *White Spray's* steward—was still staring down at the lapping sea when another voice hailed him from the bridge deck.

"That the old 'un gone off again?"

"Sure, again!" answered Macey, strolling forward till he came to the foot of the bridge ladder. "I can't make him out—going ashore at these unholy hours of the night and sometimes not returning till next day. What's his game, anyhow?"

"Ask me another." Mr. Lloyd, acting as third officer, saw opportunity for a pipe. "The whole thing's a sheer mystery," added he. "What are we here at all for, riding at anchor in Crowley Bay? We've been lying here four weeks——"

"Not quite."

"Well, nearly; and most of the crew, when first we cast anchor, were given the choice of idling below decks or taking shore leave for a month. Most of 'em went, and I believe the skipper was glad. He likes to slip off on the quiet, and he prefers being

alone. As tight as an oyster, is Captain Harcourt. I'd give a sum to know what he's up to."

Macey sniffed.

"Why worry?" observed he; "all I hope is that he doesn't come to any harm. Our skipper's behaviour may be queer, but I guess we've a nice soft job."

Saying which, Macey went below and turned in. He had spoken lightly, nor was he disturbed when, at six bells next morning, he arose to find that Captain Harcourt had not yet returned to the ship.

"Seems odd to me," remarked Henderson, the wireless expert. "D'you know, the old man always takes a revolver with him on these night trips ashore—loaded, too!"

"Not much in that. He's an ex-navy man and it's probably a habit."

So the hours wore on to midday before anyone on the *White Spray* showed any real concern.

"Look here," said Mr. Lloyd, "we'll just have our snack of grub and then two or three of us had better pull round to the haven and make some inquiries. Tell Clark and Nott to clear one of those small boats."

This was done, and an hour later a party of three set out. They pulled steadily and did not go in very close to the shore till they came opposite to a point called Wedge Cove.

Here they heard a shrill shout, and made out the figure of a boy scout who stood on the sand and beckoned.

"It's that youngster Wilson, the lightkeeper's son," declared Macey. "He may know something; let's pull in."

Now Ted Wilson, by way of introduction, was one of those keen youths who get what they want in spite of obstacles. His great ambition had been to start a body of Sea Scouts at Crowley Bay. Obliged to put this hope aside for the moment, he had joined up with a land troop at Dingford.

This meant a tramp of two miles, and Ted, this afternoon, had been on his way when an object among the ripples of Wedge Cove caught his attention.

It was a white pinnace. Other persons passing along the cliff top had probably noticed it, but Ted's sharp eyes saw more than the craft itself. He saw a trample of footmarks all round it.

On scrambling down to the cove he observed a great deal more. He recognized the pinnace as belonging to that trim yacht which rode in the bay. On seeing two or three of the yacht's crew, therefore, pulling along in a row-boat, he beckoned them ashore.

"Hullo, there's the pinnace!" he heard Macey shout. "Seen anything of Cap'n Harcourt, lad?"

"No. Is he missing?"

"Went ashore last night in that pinnace an' never returned."

"Whew!" Ted whistled. "There's been some tough work here," added he, and the others came to land as he spoke.

"Tough work? How do you know?"

"Signs. Look at this muddle of deep footprints. There's been a violent scuffle and a shot was fired."

"A shot?"

"Yes, see this splintered hole in the gunnel. If we probed we'd find the bullet, I expect. Hullo, and here are spots of red! So far as I can judge, the body was dragged off."

"The body. You don't mean——"

"Wait."

Ted began to ferret nimbly round, moving above the tide line to the harder shingle. The others waited, curiously silent. This evidence of foul play left them so astonished that they seemed ready to take advice even from a boy of fourteen.

Presently Ted came back.

"Too much trampled," he said. "There's

one footmark I should recognize again—see, it's there." Ted pointed to a broad, square-toed footmark out on the edge of the others. He measured it with the notches on his staff. "That wouldn't be Captain Harcourt's?" he queried.

"Oh no. The skipper was rather dandy about his footwear; nothing clumsy like that."

"Had he any quarrels round here, that you know of?"

"The skipper was a mystery to us; we know nothing."

"Where did you sail from?"

"Southampton."

"Well, you're fitted with wireless, I see Couple of you had better get back quickly and send word of this to Southampton, and to all the near places as well, including Dingford."

After a rapid counsel, it was decided that Mr. Lloyd and Nott should row back to the yacht, leaving Macey and Ted to make inquiries ashore.

"I suppose," began Ted, when the other two had gone, "that Constable Knowle ought to be told. What if I nip up at once, leaving you in charge here? I'll keep my eyes open as I go along and question anyone I meet."

"Right-o," agreed Macey. "I'll be waiting here."

Ted, mounting the ridges, emerged from the cove and so came to the main stretch of beach beyond. Most of this was hard shingle, with now and then a softer spot. On two of these softer patches, Ted perceived footprints, including that distinct print of a square-toed boot.

This tracking was an exciting game, for presently the boy came on signs of another struggle, with ominous red stains on the white gravel. After this the spoor was entirely lost, with small hope of being recovered. Ahead was a rocky foreshore right along to the mouth of Crowley Glen.

Switching off, Ted scaled one of the bridle-paths which led to clustering cottages, for quite half the village was built on the rise, behind the headland.

Arrived at Knowle's abode, he learned that the worthy constable was on his rounds, so just a message had to be left. Outside, however, Ted paused to glance at the notice board, where the photograph of a clean-shaven, heavy-jowled man appeared. It was labelled "Dave Mulloon", and £500 was offered for the capture of the individual it represented.

Ted had seen the notice before; the Dingford scouts, indeed, were all keen on earning that reward. At the moment, however, Ted had something else to think of. He hurried down to the village street, and was just wondering whether he should make inquiries at the inn, when a rough figure emerged therefrom, clad in dingy oilskins.

He was a stranger to Ted; a big-featured man with a fringe of stubbly beard. Ted's quick glance, taking in this man, stopped at his boots. The boots were thick and square-toed!

Now, there are plenty of square boots in the world, yet some instinct told Ted that here was the very pair which had been concerned last night in that struggle on the shore.

"I must follow him!"

That, of course, was the scout's natural thought, but he had to be wary. He could see a long way down the hill, so he kept well behind. At the foot of the steep was a narrow lane leading round to some fishermen's cottages. Here Ted's quarry disappeared.

The boy put on speed, but his man was already out of view when he gained the lane. Beyond was a strip of waste ground, a sort of paddock, where the fisherfolk dried their nets. Entering this, Ted stole along

He paused to peer through the bushes

behind the sparse hedge which divided it from the lane.

Presently he heard a whistle, and, drawing up level with the spot from which it came, he paused to peer through the bushes.

The man he had followed was standing at a garden gate in the lane just beneath. In answer to his whistle a hulking figure had appeared at the door of the cottage. Ted could make out this new figure as being that of Bandy Grigg—a local character with a lawless reputation.

Bandy Grigg came rolling down the garden path. After a furtive glance back, he leaned over and spoke hoarsely to his visitor.

" Well, then, wot's the plan?"

" As agreed last night," was the answer. " We set out with the tide and we take *him* with us. But there's work to be done first."

" Work?"

" Sure. He's still defiant; he declares that, even if we make away with him, we can't save ourselves! He says he'd collected enough evidence to arrest us a fortnight since, and that evidence is all writ down on paper in a safe on board the yacht. He declares that, as soon as he's missed, that safe will be opened and the paper read."

" Bluff!" grunted Grigg.

" Perhaps, but I don't think so. Anyhow, I've nabbed his bunch of keys and I'm going to make sure. Can you get your little crew together at once?"

" What for?"

" We must get aboard that yacht and know what's what. It'll be dark in half an hour, and we'll have only a handful to deal with. If they show fight, we'll rush 'em into a deckhouse. You needn't be afraid; they'll never see our faces."

Voices dropped; Ted could hear a word only now and then. Grigg seemed to be making objections, but he was talked down by his visitor. The latter finally said, " I'll speak to the men myself," and, pushing through the gateway, he moved up the path with Grigg, disappearing amid the gloom of the cottages.

As for Ted, he doubled back the way he had come, getting on to the cliff sward and racing at his hardest for Wedge Cove. He descended. Macey was still waiting there with the pinnace, and Ted panted forth his story.

" They mean to make an attack—an attack on the yacht. We must warn those on board to be ready."

Neither was expert in handling a motor, so it was a matter of twenty minutes before they gained the *White Spray* and climbed her swinging ladder. It was now deep dusk.

Mr. Lloyd met them, and Ted wasted no moments. He told of the threatened attack and asked what the yacht's force actually was.

" We number eight," was the brisk answer, " that's including yourself. But d'you suppose these rascals would dare——?"

" Yes!" was Ted's pat response. " Bandy Grigg and his little mob would dare anything in the way of reckless adventure. They thrive on it—and stick always to the hope of it's never being proved. There's hot work ahead, be sure of that. What have you in the way of arms?"

" Little."

" Well, collect what you can."

Those who had gathered by now caught the spirit of the thing and there was a general bustling round. Pokers, hammers, and a couple of savage clubs from the skipper's cabin were among the weapons produced. Mr. Lloyd had just remembered a firearm, and was rushing off again, when someone cried:

" *Hist!*—they're coming. A boat!"

" No, two!"

Sure enough, in the dead murk that now

surrounded the yacht, a couple of sea-boats could be seen rolling near. There was scarcely any splash of oars; evidently the attack was approaching with caution, hoping to take the vessel unawares.

"Hullo, there!" challenged Mr. Lloyd. "What craft are those?"

There was no immediate answer, but a hurried whispering in the foremost boat resulted in a stroke of oars which brought it driving alongside.

"The ladder!" shouted Macey.

It was a bad oversight; our friends had omitted to haul up the accommodation ladder, with the result that arms below were already stretched to clutch it.

"Hands off!" cried Mr. Lloyd, as he sprang to draw the ladder up, but there was the bark of a pistol from the boat below and a bullet, grazing the officer's ear, went pinging into the funnel.

"'Ere, none o' that—we sed no shootin'!" The cry arose from the boats below, amid a noisy clamour, but the lower rounds of the ladder were now fast gripped, and men were clambering on. All hope of drawing it up had to be abandoned.

"Stand by!" roared Mr. Lloyd. "Give 'em gruel! Not one must step aboard."

As he spoke, he raised the iron bar he carried and lunged at the first to appear. This was Bandy Grigg, who, dug sharply in the chest, reeled back and took the sea between the two bobbing boats. A dulling thud from Macey's hammer sent another to join him, and the head of the ladder was cleared, amid confusion and curses.

But the wild blood of those scamps was now stirred, and their second upward attempt was by way of a swarming rush. Taking off from the ascent, they made a spring at the rail, leaving the ladder-top free for others to come mounting along.

"Rally! Rally!"

All the defenders were at it now, beating back the assault or else actually at grips along the rail. These tussling pairs collapsed, all of them inward, and that was how the first of the foe arrived. A minute later the rungs were clear, for the whole boat-load were now aboard and fighting madly along the deck.

"That ladder!" gasped Mr. Lloyd again. "Try——!"

He uttered no more at the moment, for a bony fist caught him suddenly in the mouth and sent him reeling against the chart-house, where two others were grimly engaged in thumping each other's wind out.

Ere the officer could recover, Ted sprang to the yacht's side and brought up the ladder in a sweeping snatch. A howl of chagrin sounded from below, for the second boat-load had been just about to clutch; in fact, the ladder was actually whipped out of their fingers. Ted made it fast and turned to meet the ugly rush of one Joe Owter.

Owter was a hanger-on of Bandy Grigg's —a slinking scrag of a man with beady eyes. No doubt his intention, at the moment, was to cut away the ladder which Ted had made fast, but the glimpse of a long, keen blade in the man's hand made Ted strike out.

The boy's only weapon was his trusty staff, but he had practised stave-play and knew how to use it to quick purpose. His first whizzing stroke took Owter's knuckles so smartly that the knife rattled on the deck and Ted's charging body prevented it's being regained.

Owter, staggering back, somehow recovered his balance, and, crouching, came at Ted with a tigerish snarl. Ted, not unprepared, himself dodged and hugged his man about the middle. They blundered upon a davit and lurched beneath the keel of the port lifeboat. Tearing himself away, Ted grabbed again at his staff and aimed a terrific blow as Owter rose to spring.

It caught the man above his bony nose,

slant-wise between the eyes, and with such stinging force that he fell without a moan and lay stunned in the scuppers. Satisfied that one invader was reckoned with, Ted swung smartly on his heel and raced forward.

His heart leapt with hope, for it almost seemed that his was the winning side. The raiders, at all events, had now been harried forward and were making a sort of last stand near the engine-room skylights.

"We're doing it, lads, we're rattling them!" pealed Mr. Lloyd's tones. "All together, and heave 'em into the sea. Rush! All together, rush!"

They obeyed, with a gasping cheer, Ted being in time to join the charge. Some of the invaders were carried down, while others wavered, breaking left and right. Victory seemed assured when a sudden shout from the fore deck put new heart into the desperadoes.

"Hold on to it, lads; here we come! We're with you!"

Figures were seen swarming like monkeys near the fo'c'sle head. As a matter of fact, the second boat-load, having worked forward along the hull, had managed to shin up by aid of bobstays and cable, and were now all aboard the yacht. With a bawling cheer they came leaping to the main deck.

"Lump together, boys, lump together!"

It was a daunting moment, and the defenders could scarce come into a compact body about the foremast before the new onslaught came hurtling upon them.

They gave way; it was beyond all human power to resist, for the odds were two to one. For Ted Wilson it was one crowded minute, during which he smote and smote again with his staff, going down at last beneath a very hail of blows.

On recovering, and sitting up dazed, he saw his comrades being hounded aft in full flight. A couple of them, one being Mr. Lloyd, had been hustled into the chart-house and the door locked upon them. Others, as far down as the poop, were being rounded up and bundled into berths beneath the hurricane deck.

"Good powers!" gasped Ted. "We've l-lost the fight! They've collared the ship!"

Ted, though a bundle of aches, laboured to his feet and made a game plunge for the companion stairs. Stumbling down, he came to a cross gangway with folding doors in the middle.

One of these doors stood open, and, fumbling in, Ted found himself in what was evidently the main saloon. He had scarce grasped this before there was a clatter of feet on the stairs behind.

Ted banged the door, trying to hold both together by means of pressure until he could turn the key.

His very eagerness, as well as his dazed condition, baffled him, and next moment a weight came thudding against the barrier. Ted's shoving body held it at the first impact and a furious voice cried:

"It's locked! 'Ere, come on, slick, lend your power."

"No, see, this is easiest, a windy that lights to the gangway. We'll get in there."

Crash! Ted heard a Muranese window above the lounge shatter to a blow, but entry was never attempted that way, for a second drive at the door sent it flying wide and our hero half across the floor. The first to enter was he of the square-toed boots, and at him it was that Ted now rushed with swinging staff.

With a snort, the man dodged, coming round with a half-hook that simply lifted the boy off his feet. He crumpled down in a limp heap, his face as white as chalk. One of the others, bending to look, muttered:

"Good powers! You've done for 'im—you've finished the kid right off."

It really did seem like it, but Ted, as a

matter of fact, was one of those people whose features always go pale with excitement, and also he possessed a very thick skull. So, though the blow had been violent, and though his head had got a crash, he was not actually senseless. Indeed, his brain was just clearing when the remark about his being " done for " was made.

He stayed as he was, propped anyhow against the door, without moving so much as an eyelid. He realized, as in a flash, that only wit could save matters now.

The intruders were making a sort of frantic search, rummaging drawers, breaking desks, and turning out cupboards. For some while it was all in vain, till their leader's eye suddenly alighted on what looked like a square, deep ottoman near which Ted was lying.

The drapery of this " ottoman " was ruckled slightly, and the man caught a glimpse of some hard, green-painted surface. He made a snatch; the padded top and the cretonne came full away, revealing a green-painted iron safe.

" Hooray!"

In his fierce delight the man flung the cretonne full across the saloon, then dived a hand to his oilskins and tugged forth a bunch of keys. There was a rattle-rattle until at length he found one to fit.

" Cheero again!"

The door of the safe was wrenched open, and its contents—drawers, letters, documents, and a small handbag—all tumbled out on the floor. The papers were rapidly examined, till at length one was specially noticed, a thick, folded script—which bore an inscription. This the finder began to read out aloud.

" ' *Information* '," read he, " ' *regarding the lawless acts, and illicit trading, carried on by*——' oh, ay, here it is," broke off the reader, " with all our names writ down in Cap'n Harcourt's fist."

" Sakes!" muttered one of the others. " Well, you was right, then. A darned good job us come 'ere first an' got hold o' this."

" Sure; it might ha' got us all snapped up an' landed in prison. But we ought to be safe now; we got this sea-spy an' we got his records."

" That's so, but our next job is to get away wi' both. Say, we'll need to look slippy if we're to get out of Crowley Glen this tide."

" You're dead right. Here, hop along!"

They all went bundling from the saloon, the square-toed rascal last. He paused outside to take a last glint at Ted's prostrate form. Fully satisfied then, he snapped the door and went hurrying after his gang.

Ted sat up, listening alertly; then, recovering his hat and staff, he climbed softly to the deck.

The ladder had once again been lowered overside, and the ragtail band were swarming down to their boats. Soon they were away, but Ted allowed the splash of their oars to die out before setting about the rescue of his friends.

These, from chart-house and berths, he liberated at once, gratified to find that, though bruised and ruffled, all were alive and fit for action.

Ten minutes passed in eager talk.

" What can we possibly do?" exclaimed Macey. " Thanks to your cuteness, youngster, we know that our best hope of foiling these rogues lies in getting to Crowley Glen at once. How's that to be done?"

" Why, the pinnace——" began Nott.

" I know, but we're only a handful still, an' a very battered handful. How can we hope to prevail against that teeming crew?"

" Well, is there time to nip round to the haven first, and—hist! What's that?"

There sounded to their ears the buzzing of a powerful engine and the churning of a screw. The yacht's riding-light, which had

been run up before hostilities commenced, cast a dancing gleam on the heave of brine, and into this gleam purred the fine, sleek body of a big motor-launch, manned, apparently, by armed bluejackets.

"Yacht, ahoy! Is that the *White Spray*?"

"Ay, and you?"

"This launch was on fisheries duty off Chelm Harbour; we were ordered here on account of a wireless you sent out. Can we be of any service?"

"I just reckon you can!" exclaimed Mr. Lloyd, amid a rousing murmur. "We need you to make Crowley Glen in record time. Can you do with a couple more aboard there?"

"Ay, four or five, if you wish; but lightness means speed."

"Two will do, for I see you're an armed party. Come on, youngster."

With Ted and Mr. Lloyd aboard, the launch sped onward, with just a brief exchange of notes between the lieutenant in change and Mr. Lloyd. The lieutenant, apparently, had some knowledge of Captain Harcourt's mission, but there was little time for him to offer details. The cleaved headland at the mouth of Crowley Glen loomed into view.

"There they are—see! We are none too soon."

Between the towering cliffs of the gorge a broad-beamed yawl bulked to view, seemingly full of men and cargo.

A man was fending off astern, for the sails were not yet set. That was the task those dare-alls were about when Lieutenant Hart's voice surprised them.

"Drop that sail," pealed he, "and up with your hands—sharp!"

Ted rushed forward with swinging staff

There was a confusion of voices, and a vaguely seen stumbling amid the cargo lumped astern. Then, mingled with oaths and urgent cries, the sudden flash and bang of some small-arm. A bullet whined over the launch, while the bluejackets, at a rapped word, presented rifles and let out a shattering volley which rolled and echoed to the gorge.

The aim had been purposely low, but enough had been heard of a fierce shower of lead to put the fear of death into most of those rugged hearts.

"Run her aport," roared Hart. "Put her ashore this minute or I'll riddle you where you live. Are you going to obey?"

There was a gasping chorus, nothing articulate; but obedience was as practical as it could possibly be made. That hazy crew, with but a couple of rebellious voices, was completely cowed.

Tumbling out, they stood in a line on the shore, while the launch party also came to land.

"That's right, lads," ordered the young officer. "Stand up there and keep 'em covered. They've a prisoner here, I see."

Climbing into the yawl, he lifted a gagged and bound figure. Being set free, this proved to be Captain Harcourt, the missing master of the *White Spray*, whose left arm was bandaged.

He shook hands with his rescuers generally, and with Ted Wilson in particular, for it was soon made clear that but for him there might have been no rescue at all.

"As you may have guessed," explained Captain Harcourt, speaking to everyone, "this is a case of smuggling—but smuggling of no ordinary degree. From Holland to the Orkneys, right down the coast of Scotland to these quiet shores, a highly organized traffic has been flourishing for years. A notorious outlaw came to work it at this end—a man whose name has been in everybody's mouth. You know who I mean?"

"Dave Mulloon!" exclaimed several voices.

"Right, he's the rascal, and it seemed as though he never would be booked. Well, I was sent here to keep watch. My case against the gang was fully complete when, last night, I made a slip and was caught myself. However, thanks chiefly to young Wilson, all ends well. I know now exactly how these plotters work, and I've captured the leading rogue."

"The leading rogue?" echoed Ted Wilson. "You—you don't mean, sir, that you've captured——"

"See here!"

Captain Harcourt, as he uttered this, turned upon the wearer of the square-toed boots. With rather a dramatic movement, he seized that sullen one's beard, plucking it clean off.

There was a thrill of astonishment, a murmur of amaze. For the stripping of that beard revealed a man with a heavy jowl. There was a great shout of:

"*Dave Mulloon!*"

"Quite correct," answered Captain Harcourt; "he's caught at last!"

The excitement in Crowley that night would be hard to describe. The neighbourhood, for months past, had been kept agape by rumours about this outlaw, and many there were who had dreamed of rounding him up.

None, among these, had been keener than Ted Wilson, so imagine that youth's excitement when he found the dream had come true. In due time, anyhow, he received very practical thanks for the part he had played. Captain Harcourt remembered too, and he it was who helped Ted to form a fine band of Sea Scouts at Crowley.

"Keep well awake," advised he, "for *other adventures may be in store—and you may be needed again!*"

The Curious Case of the Younger Chibnall

by G. A. Ogg

I

"Man! Oh, man, get down to it!"

The younger Chibnall heard the voice, knew it for his brother's, and made a piteous effort to cast his unwilling body at the feet of the oncoming pack. Like some faint-hearted diver on the brink of a plunge he stood a moment, then turned his back to the merciless wave of St. Hulda's forwards. They engulfed the younger Chibnall and rushed him bodily—hands to head and knees tucked under chin—across the line. Someone touched down, the try was proclaimed, and the wave fell back. An exultant roar from the St. Hulda's side greeted the registering of the full five points, as the ball rose clean from an unerring toe and sailed high between the posts, almost before the defaulting full-back had time to gather himself from unsympathetic Mother Earth, with a coward hope in his heart that the side he had disgraced would withhold the accusing gaze of its fourteen pairs of outraged eyes.

He essayed a lift of his humbled own, and they met on all sides reproachful stares, though little was said. Only his captain, as he trotted his team back to centre, flung a last desperate exhortation to the hapless Chibnall:

"Chilblains, you rabbit, there's time yet, if only you'll play the game. Remember, you've got watching you the best back Ravelstone's ever had. Stop harrowing him with the exhibition of his young brother behaving like the very worst. Tackle like you kick and we'll pull through yet. That last five-points gift of yours has only put them square. We'll hold them up if you get down to it."

The chastened Chibnall, not for the first time that luckless afternoon, mumbled something about doing his best. That

St. Hulda's were square at all, with a score of thirteen points all, was a condition of things for which he was almost wholly to blame, for Ravelstone had been playing a great game; and the St. Hulda's scores need never have been, but for Chibnall's execrable tackling.

And now, with five minutes to go, there was time for yet another St. Hulda score that would bring with it unutterable shame to the Chibnall escutcheon. In the hushed silence before the referee's whistle gave the signal for the restart Andrew Chibnall had time to issue a last despairing appeal.

" Charlie! Oh, man, get down to it this time! Just this once!"

Charlie shrugged a spine that felt encased in plaster of Paris, and summoned a smile as watery as the grey-black November clouds that hung low over the playing-fields. Before he had time to frame to his brother the promise his heart foretold him he could not keep, the battle had entered upon its ultimate phase. The revivified ball, low-skimming over the massed strength of the St. Hulda's forwards, found a momentary billet in the lap of one of their backs, who rid himself of it with a long raking kick towards touch in Ravelstone territory. Here young Chibnall, with room to move and the whole St. Hulda's multitude impotent till the kicker should struggle abreast of their foremost, was the equal of his task. Snatching the descending oval from the very brink of what would have been a disastrous touch well inside the Ravelstone " 25 ", he darted forward with it as far as prudence and good judgment would let him, and found touch gloriously near the enemy's lines with a kick that all but restored his pride-levelled brother to a radiant optimism. " A mighty fine kick," growled Andrew into his muffler. The youngster would pull through yet—perhaps.

The skyward hands of the longest and lankiest of the Ravelstone forwards secured the ball from the line-out that followed, and slung it, in best modern English style, to the eager, expectant backs. They cut with it diagonally across the field towards the left wing and the St. Hulda's lines. Swift as one was tackled, swift and slick and sure he got his pass to his neighbour as he fell. On the ball tossed, always a little gained before it was transferred to a new pair of hands, till it reached the Ravelstone left wing, who, finding himself hemmed against the touch-line with the St. Hulda's full-back fronting him with open, hungry arms, wheeled round in his tracks, with the neatest reverse pass the exulting Andrew, yelling encouragement from an arm's distance, had seen for many a long day. How the cry choked in his throat at the sight of that rare pass intercepted at flying speed by the fleetest player in all the thirty, St. Hulda's right-wing-three-quarter!

Andrew Chibnall took in the field at a glance and groaned. High up towards the Ravelstone end stood the slight, irresolute figure of his young brother. Towards this distant atom the St. Hulda's crack three-quarter steered a masterly course, eluding half the Ravelstone side in his headlong flight. The lithe form canted left-wise in a swerve towards mid-field, alive to the advantage to be gained by planting the ball plumb behind the posts. Young Chibnall scurried across the field to intercept. His brother, wise to the boy's unhappy failings, had a fleeting image—of a Yorkshire terrier yapping round the legs of a retriever. And so, alas! it proved. Young Chibnall, up in time, had only to throw a resolute clasp about the legs of the invader to lay him low. But his heart failed him for the last deadliest time. Shirking the impact against that militant mass of bone and boot-leather, his outstretched arms clawed feebly just outside the fatal circle of swing-

"Oh, man, get down to it!"

ing, threatening arms and legs. The St. Hulda's star shot ahead unscathed, with a clear field before him and the fatuous Chibnall grovelling conventionally in his wake, in the wild hope of conveying an impression of having made the worthiest of efforts to hold a human whirlwind. But Andrew and the panting multitude behind were not deceived. Young Chibnall rose in time to see the ball grassed behind the posts. A moment later his delighted side were up and around the scorer, and the ball was retrieved for a gift of a goal-kick that hoisted a final score of eighteen points to thirteen in favour of St. Hulda's.

The ball trickled for the last time over the dead-ball line. The game was over!

Stiff, staccato cheers for visitors and vanquished alike barked across the still, dank air of the darkening playing-fields: then the muddied striped jerseys of St. Hulda's mingled fraternally with the muddied white of Ravelstone, as the teams trooped tiredly pavilion-wards, already speculating on the lulling delights of hot baths and hotter tea. Andrew and the ignominious Charlie brought up the tail of the procession. There was silence between the brothers for a while, each sensing the other's presence rather than proving it by touch or speech. The shadow of mutual disgrace moved with them as they went. Then Andrew—with an eye on the pavilion, and an uneasy thought of the post-mortems that would be held there, whilst the rival teams refreshed their bodies (and consequently their memories of the game's incidents)—flung his words straight ahead:

The St. Hulda's star shot ahead

"Better come with me, Charlie. I've a spare coat in the side-car. We'll bike over to Haverham for tea. I can get you a bath at the aerodrome. Afterwards I can run you back to school again when things are quieter."

The younger boy looked his gratitude.

"Thanks, Andrew," was all he could say, and nothing more passed between the brothers till the head of the straggling procession had reached the pavilion steps, and was dragging weary legs to the dressing-room.

"Jump in: they'll never notice us," said Andrew, leading the way under the arch of the pavilion steps, where he had garaged his bike.

A few curious heads turned as the machine-gun rappings of the awakening engine rattled under the balcony: a moment later, swinging deftly on to the cinder-path that led out of the fields, Andrew made a rapid bee-line for the main road. One cruel shout stabbed the air above the voice of the engine as the brothers broke away:

"Funking your gruel too, little Chilblains?"

The unhappy youth in the side-car squirmed as under a lash, and stole a look at Andrew. He seemed not to have heard. Now they were out of earshot—now out of sight round a kindly bend of the road.

II

Those were war days. Andrew Chibnall had left school at the end of the summer term, having notched a place for himself amongst the school's worthiest. Ravelstone was not likely to boast again a better full-back. It had been largely on the strength of his brother's reputation, backed by a certain genius of his own for touch-finding and place-kicking, that the younger Chibnall had got his chance in the school team. As a valorous tackler he had always been eminently wanting. Watching him from the first practice games with a growing anxiety that had latterly turned to disgust, the school had come to despair of his ever reproducing the high courage of his famous brother; and it had only needed the supreme *débâcle* of the St. Hulda's match to write "finis" to his career in the First Fifteen.

Ravelstone would have no more of him now on top of so palpable a failure. There were other full-backs close on his heels to displace him—not so fleet-footed perhaps; not such wizards at fielding and kicking; but less fearful of going down to the ball and laying low their man. There was Dicky Onslow, and there was Kit Latham, and—— Charlie Chibnall mentally catalogued the list of his possible successors, sitting melancholy before a genial stove in his brother's living-hut at Haverham Aerodrome, clean and warm after his tub and a generous tea, but desperately sore at heart.

How he envied Andrew the chance two years seniority, enabling him to close his school career at the end of the summer term and embrace that romantic arm of the fighting services that had beckoned invitingly to him all through the spring and summer months, when the machines from the neighbouring Haverham Aerodrome droned ceaselessly in the daytime over the envious heads of all Ravelstone, chained to the desk in stuffy classrooms!

Now Andrew was all but a pilot, already confident of his fledgling wings on that very aerodrome he had looked so longingly towards during the final dreary days of his scholastic bondage. Andrew would be gazetted "Flying Officer"—accredited God in the Machine—as soon as he got through his final flying test. Andrew would, within a week, be adding to his laurels. Andrew loomed bigger and bigger before the de-

spondent vision of the dispirited Charlie—bigger and more brilliant than ever, whilst he himself dwarfed to nothingness in the estimation of a school that despised him. Charlie felt no jealousy there, before the little stove-fire—only the dull, gnawing ache of knowing himself a failure. Andrew's voice sounded from the hut corner:

"Wonderful man, Mr. Lewis. Great brain—don't know how he ever thought of it."

The name, strange to Charlie, roused him out of his low reverie.

"Mr. Lewis who?" he asked, eyes still on the fire.

"Mr. Machine-gun Lewis," said Andrew from his corner. "Come and look."

Charlie rose and went over to his brother. He was standing over a table on which lay the scattered parts of a Lewis gun. In the course of the ensuing impromptu lesson on stripping, assembling, and firing this intriguing weapon Charlie achieved a temporary forgetfulness of his troubles. And here let it be confessed, to Andrew's further honour, that he had deliberately planned the diversion to wean the discredited young full-back from his heart-searchings.

His effort was not in vain. Charlie, in common with most boys of his age, had a passion for things mechanical, and did not rest until, with Andrew's willing help, he had made a thorough examination of the gun. So simple!—so easy to control and fire, thought Charlie. The trouble, of course, began with the stoppages. They sounded so numerous and so formidable that the neophyte gunner began to wonder how the gun was ever kept in fluent action.

"It's like French verbs," Andrew explained. "The irregularities are the exceptions, though you don't think so whilst you're learning them." And he went into the discussion of the various devices that went to minimizing the risk of stoppage in the air.

"You could see for yourself," he said suddenly, "if I could only get you up with me. But," he looked curiously at Charlie across the table, "perhaps you wouldn't take kindly to the air?"

He had put the question as delicately as he could, and was scarcely prepared for the outburst that followed.

"Andrew!"—the younger brother's face was flushed and eloquent of self-secrets he had never yet given tongue to—only half understood, perhaps. "Andrew, listen. You just don't understand. You think, and I don't blame you, that because I can't *will* myself to lie down and be trampled on by St. Hulda's forwards, and shrink from downing a big man in a straight tackle, that I'm the 'funk' the fellows call me. It's just because you don't know me—and indeed I only half-know myself. But I *do* know"—Charlie's wide grey eyes blazed with the earnestness of what he was saying, trying to make them speak the things his lips found so hard to say—"I *do* know that it's not just fear. It's something that comes and puts my body in a kind of straight-jacket, as soon as the game starts, and won't let me free till it's over. That's not just fear, is it? Oh, Andrew, can't you remember the trees at home? Couldn't I beat you at climbing them? You used to think me pluckier than yourself then. But I knew better, I knew that my climbing wasn't really brave, that it was just—absence of the straight-jacket. And it would be the same with flying, I'm sure. I couldn't feel the straight-jacket there. I wouldn't feel danger there. I'd be too happy. The very thought of climbing those dizzy thousands of feet into the air, and feeling the rush of it in my ears makes me tingle. I keep quoting a poet, whose name I can't

remember but whose words I can't forget. Something about a man who wrote a poem about clouds—' The Universe is his box of toys . . . He chases the rolling world.' —Is that what flying feels like to you, Andrew?"

Charlie came to a breathless end. Andrew's question had acted like nippers in the innermost coil of a taut spring fretting for release. There was a likeness, in Charlie's wild tangled outburst, to the mad irresistible uncoiling of such a spring, and, in his sudden stop, to the strengthless silence that succeeds so reckless an expenditure of dynamic energy.

Andrew, whose laboured pupil-flights had been too preoccupied with rudders and ailerons, flat-spins and sideslips to allow contemplation of such poetic images, laughed indulgently. He was trying hard to size up this quaint brother of his, whom he seemed to know so little and understand less, whose character seemed such a paradox to his plain ways of thinking. But if Andrew thought plainly he thought rapidly, and his decisions came in a flash. He would give Charlie his chance of proving his air-worthiness, even at the risk of official discovery. He spoke quickly:

" Look here, Charlie. I'm down for night-flying on Monday night. In a two-seater. You can come in the back seat as ballast. I'll take the risk of being found out. Get away from school—I don't care how—and be hanging about the hedges on the inland side of the aerodrome about eight o'clock. There are no huts there, and the hangars are all at the sea end. I'll have to taxi out towards the hedges to ' take off ', as the winds blows steadily from the sea at this time of year. I'll have flying-coat, cap, and goggles in the seat for you. We'll be away about three-quarters of an hour. I'll try to land as far from the hangars as I can, and you can get out on the blind side without anyone noticing. The dark will screen us. I'll leave you to fix the school end of the adventure; I'll take the aerodrome end. Will that satisfy your poetic longings for a ' tumble amid the stars '?"

The younger brother's eyes looked his heart's gratitude more adequately than his words could speak it. He saw at once the realization of an ambition and the recapture of Andrew's respect for him. If there was challenge in Andrew's invitation—the challenge to make words good—he must have quick and resolute answer.

" Monday night; eight o'clock. I won't keep you waiting, Andrew. I'll thank you properly when the show's over—if you can stand it. I know you haven't much use for orations of that sort. Perhaps I can best show my gratitude by making a good job of my end of the show. That'll help to lessen the risks you're running for me."

" I am not particularly afraid of the risks," said Andrew. " It's true enough that I might find myself up against things if anything went wrong. It might even mean court martial. But that's spice to the adventure anyway. Now get ready, and I'll run you back to Ravelstone."

. . . . . .

The week-end served for the more careful maturing of the plans of both brothers. Their aim was identical—to see to it that eight o'clock of the Monday night would find them the undisputed and unsuspected tenants of an aeroplane ready-winged for flight. Andrew's was the lighter task.

It was already on the squadron's work programme that he would carry out the last of his night-flying tests in a reconnaissance two-seater with war load at that hour on that night. " War load ", for this purpose, meant taking the two machine-guns proper to this type of machine—the Vickers synchronized to fire through the

propeller on pressure of a lever on the "joy-stick"; and a Lewis on a free swivel-mounting in the observer's cockpit behind—together with the necessary ammunition, and the usual ballast of 150 lb. in the form of sandbags, which took the place of an actual observer in pupil-flights.

Andrew's only real anxiety was this matter of sandbags. They were a fixture in the bottom of the observer's cockpit in the one machine set aside for this particular test (and kept in ever-ready reserve as a defence machine in case of air raids, the aerodrome fringing upon the North Sea—albeit in a latitude as yet immune). These sandbags could scarcely be removed without exciting some suspicion, Andrew felt sure. On the other hand, if they were allowed to remain, then, with guns and ammunition and the human freight that would be awaiting him in the shadow of the inland hedges, he would have to take off with a load, not too great for the machine, but much in excess of any he had till then attempted.

After due consideration and much weighing of possibilities in the balance, Andrew decided to leave the machine's equipment well alone. Charlie might be excess luggage; but he was at least a light-weight, and would not unduly strain the machine's lifting capacity. For that matter, the time would doubtless come when he would be called upon to pilot far heavier loads than this—if a bombing squadron fell to his lot. Andrew slept well on his decision.

Meanwhile Charlie, at Ravelstone, revolved many and complicated plans to

Andrew's voice sounded above the drone of the engine

ensure his unsuspected absence from school precincts for some hours on the night of the Monday. As every boarding-school boy with good red blood in him has at one time or other successfully accomplished this end, in spite of the massed might of his school authorities, it would be here idle to do more than report that Charlie Chibnall, towards the appointed hour on the appointed night, lay hid in the lee of the appointed hedge, with dark-accustomed eyes trained on the unblinking interior lights of the distant hangars.

A letter L of petrol flares, with the short leg towards the sea end of the aerodrome, pricked the darkness with splashes of flame between the crouched figure in the hedges and the sheds. Suddenly, as Charlie looked, the low hum of an engine was borne across the aerodrome on the wind's wings, and a dark shape crept out of the hangars down the edge of the L's long leg. The shape grew in volume as it neared the hedges till it seemed to loom, with black wings outstretched, almost above the hedge where Charlie lay. Then, with an angrier hum than ever, its tail swept round majestically, its nose fronted to the sheds, and the hangar lights winked between the blades of its low-spinning propeller. A waved arm shot up from the sable fuselage. Charlie took the signal and darted forward. Andrew's voice sounded above the drone of the engine:

"Everything's there—in the back seat. Get them on as we climb. There's a step there—let into the fuselage. Put your foot to it and jump in. Mind the Lewis gun mounting. Hurry."

With a heart that beat high up somewhere in his throat Charlie embraced the side of the fuselage, and inexpertly tumbled into the rear cockpit.

Andrew's voice rushed back on him again in the propeller blast:

"In all right? Now keep low as we cross over the hangars or they'll see you. Curl yourself round the observer's piano-stool—anywhere. Only don't poke your head up till I tell you."

With that Andrew slowly opened his throttle, and the hum rose to a roar. Crouched low inside the fuselage Charlie felt like a bee cooped in the placid centre of a swift-travelling cyclone. He knew nothing of time or space, nothing of the rush up-wind along the line of the flares, and the low swoop over the sheds with the black figures of watchers dotting the pools of light that flooded the "tarmac", white upturned faces aswim in them—nothing till his brother's voice cleaved the black velvet pall that encompassed him.

"We're at three thousand now and over the sea. You can look over."

Charlie "looked over". A solid blast smote him, and his maladjusted cap and goggles were snatched away into the nothingness behind. The great wind swept over his unprotected head, "stream-lined" his hair, and filled his naked eyes with tears not of his own creating. Truth to tell, despite the dark, the gale, and the strangeness of his perch in a winter night sky, the Rugger-shy Charlie was beginning to enjoy himself immensely. His streaming eyes strove to pierce the blackness above and around and below, till he began to distinguish its varying shades. It was darkest ahead; almost grey below, where a tumbling sea flashed phosphorescent beacons skywards from its angry wave-crests. Charlie abandoned himself to the delicious onslaught on his thrilled senses, whilst Andrew climbed the machine up an invisible stairway to a table-land of star-sown clouds. Charlie, in an emotional ecstasy, was fast losing all sense of earth, time, and Ravelstone in a wrapt contemplation of the dim splendours about him, when the roar in his ears suddenly ceased,

and the machine dropped swiftly through the clouds they had just gained. In the midst of wild pre-visions of disembodiment and disintegration—the change from climb to glide had been startlingly sudden—Charlie heard Andrew again:

" It's incredible, but just now, as we topped these clouds, I spotted a shape ahead that made me think of ' Zepps '. I'll glide slow. You listen. But it may be only a cloud."

Charlie, ears on the stretch, heard nothing: and Andrew nodded agreement to the admission. Unwilling to lose more height, he gave his engine petrol again and restarted his climb. If it was a Zepp, (the night was moonless and Haverham well out of the track of all pervious raids), it would be between him and the land by the time he had pierced the cloud-layer above him; with a little luck he might emerge above it. All the while he climbed he smiled at the possibility of a wingless pilot and a schoolboy piping lead-fire into a raid-hardened Zeppelin. He twisted his head round to see how Charlie was taking it. He was at least standing up to it—that was as much as he learnt from the darkness. The boy's face was suddenly against his, and he heard:

" I've found a Lewis drum in the side of the fuselage and have loaded the gun. D'you think it really is a Zepp?"

" If it is," Andrew yelled back, " I'll get above it and then dive, firing the Vickers. The bullets are incendiary and only need to hit the gas-bag. If I miss, you get in with the Lewis as we dive past. Good thing you learned how to fire it the other night."

Charlie caught enough of this to understand the part he might have to play. He stood tense in the cockpit, his hair the sport of the mighty breeze, eyes striving to pierce the clouds around him. Suddenly the stars showed through the wrack again, and they mounted clear to a world of dark blue light. Their quick eyes swept the night horizon, as they turned westward and shoreward. A small black circle spotted the blue just above the cloud-rim. It grew smaller in the direction of the land. Andrew opened his throttle full and gave chase, always climbing a little. The spot grew slowly larger, changed from round to oval, as the aeroplane climbed and gained on it; grew and grew as they gained on it, till it hung, confessed beyond a doubt, the black hull of a hostile raider.

A spit of fire from its unseen top platform and a red stream rattling past the starboard planes warned Andrew that he had been seen—that they were firing. The moment had come. He throttled down, yelling:

" Now for it. Stand to your Lewis!"

The nose dropped, pointing in its dive to the black bulk of the airship below. Andrew's fingers tightened round the firing lever of the Vickers. There came no clamorous rattle, no tongue of flame. The gun had jammed without firing a shot! Andrew jerked again convulsively. Nothing happened! The dive grew steeper. Now they were abreast—now beneath the hull—fair prey of both gondolas' guns. A stream of flaming bullets flickered past—just too short! Andrew, in a last despair, remembered Charlie behind, and changed from dive to " zoom " in the nick of time. The machine, with all its diving speed in hand, rocketed upwards from under the Zeppelin's hull. Andrew tilted the nose as high as he dared—then farther, till he " stalled ". In the awful moment before the inevitable dive, Charlie's Lewis gun spoke to the Zeppelin. Andrew, with his back to the airship, saw nothing, knew nothing—only that they were about to fall. Then the nose went down in search of flying-speed. Falling, Andrew had time to throw one glance above. A crimson ball of fire hung almost over them. Its size increased with incredible

rapidity, and a minute later the glowing skeleton of the stricken airship tumbled out of the skies and streaked to the cold seas beneath, trailing a fiery wake. The breath of its passing was hot on the brothers' faces.

. . . . . .

Andrew said, as they made landwards in an easy glide: " I'll try to land as far from the hangars as I can, and you can get out on the blind side without anyone noticing. The dark will screen us."

There was a pause, then Andrew's voice again: " You will go back to school and say nothing, Charlie. Nothing. Promise me."

Charlie was equal to the sacrifice—rose to it manfully. He leaned over upon his brother's broad back, put his mouth against the ear-flap of his flying-cap, and gave his promise.

" The school will know nothing from me, Andrew. They can throw ' Funk!' at me if they like. You know better. That's enough for me. D'you think they'll suspect at the aerodrome?"

Andrew gave back:

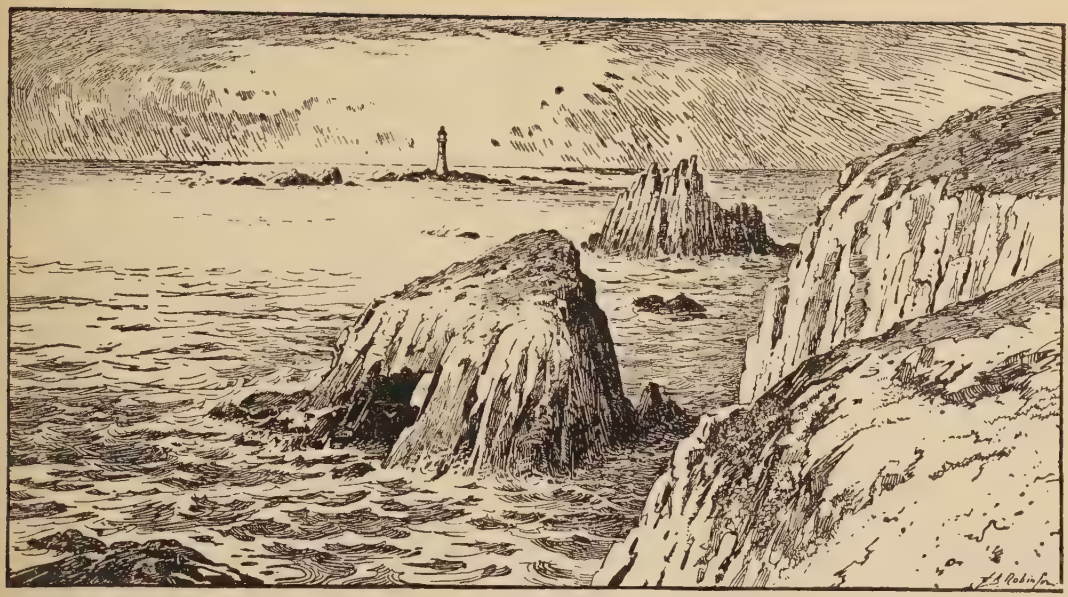
" They may ask questions. I can put them off. It happened out to sea. I can just say I saw a blaze that dropped into the sea and disappeared. They may make a search—a few spars may be washed up on the beach. It is unlikely there will be any survivors to tell tales on us. They'll puzzle and probe a little, then dismiss it as one of the war's unsolved mysteries. At least I hope so. Now for the landing."

Andrew made a good landing according to plan. Charlie was ready, and slipped to grass as soon as they slowed up. Without a word he made for the hedge shadows. Andrew taxied labouringly to the sheds up the line of the flares.

. . . . . .

Beyond the discovery of a certain amount of wreckage washed up by the tide—enough to identify " L 93 " of the German Imperial Air Fleet—nothing was ever known in official quarters of the manner of the Zeppelin's fate. Andrew bluffed well, and Charlie at Ravelstone faithfully kept his mouth shut. Andrew might tell, perhaps—in Andrew's good time—when it was safe to do so.

It remains to the chronicler to record that Charlie continued to play indifferent Rugby to the bitter end of the season. Only, it was no longer for Ravelstone's First Fifteen. He flitted ingloriously, from match to match, between the Seconds and the Thirds.



The Longships, off Land's End

The Lighthouse-keeper's Life

By Arthur O. Cooke

For one who loves those lighthouses, the lamps of which, from sunset until sunrise, circle the shores of Britain with a chain of gold, a single article is but a narrow space in which to tell their tale. Much might be said of the antiquity of lighthouses; much, too, about the architectural beauty of such stately structures as the Eddystone and Skerryvore. Intensely fascinating and romantic is the story of their building; few more thrilling tales exist than those plain narratives in which John Smeaton and Robert Stevenson have recounted all the perils, difficulties, disappointments met with and surmounted as one stone was laid upon another, till their sea-girt towers stood complete. The scientific reader might perhaps care to trace the road by which, from Smeaton's four-and-twenty candles glimmering feebly from the Eddystone a century ago, advance was made to the great lamps of many million candle-power that flash out across the sea to-day; or we might show the difference that exists between " occulting ", " flashing ", and " group-flashing " lights.

All this the present article must leave aside; it will deal chiefly with the life lived by the men whose dwelling-place, for many months each year, is in these

sea-surrounded towers; men who, cut off from daily contact with their fellows, from the pleasures, news, amusements of the world, are well entitled to a little thought.

For this purpose lighthouses may be divided into three classes, one of which only will be fully dealt with here; they are either " mainland ", " island ", or " rock " lighthouses. The first may be dismissed in a few words, for they involve their keepers in no specially peculiar mode of life. A mainland lighthouse—one of many standing on cliff, shore, or breakwater from Lizard to the Pentland Firth, from Hartland Point to the North Foreland—has two keepers on its staff, a third being added when a fog-horn is attached. The keepers take four-hour " watches ", turn and turn about; each, when off duty, has his cottage and his wife and family at hand, and leads a life that calls for no particular remark.

Different it is with keepers of a light-house built upon some island, which, though small, is large enough to give accommodation to their wives and families. A few such islands are in English waters; but they are more common off the Scottish coast, where we shall find May Island in the Firth of Forth, the tiny Isle of Fidra near North Berwick, Sanda Island in the Firth of Clyde, and many more. Here, as on shore, the keepers have their families, their cottages and gardens, but it is a curious isolated life they lead; for they are on the island fifty weeks in every year, with but a fortnight's change of scene. On Fidra, for example, are two keepers; they, their families, with a cat, goats, and poultry, are the sole inhabitants.

May Island, with its powerful electric light, is by comparison a densely populated place. Besides the two light-keepers, five other men are employed in the electric power-house, in working the fog-horn, and in hauling coal from landing-stage to engine-room—a task for which a horse is kept. These, with their families, make up a population of fifteen or twenty, and " the May " provides a golf-course for their amusement.

Perchance Smith minor asks: " What of the children on such islands? Is it a schoolless Paradise in which they live?" It is; but when they reach school age they go ashore in term-time, and the cost of their school and boarding is in great part borne by the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses. This body rules the Scottish lights, with those upon and round the Isle of Man; while English lighthouses, including those of Gibraltar, are controlled by the Elder Brethren of the Trinity.

But lighthouse life in its full sense is that led by the keepers of such towers as the Eddystone, the Bishop (off the Scilly Islands), the Bell Rock; towers which, many miles from land, keep guard upon some sea-surrounded, sea-swept reef. Is not romance suggested by their very names? especially by such as we encounter in the north and west of Scotland—Skerryvore, Dhuheartach, Girdleness and Stroma, Hellyar-Holm, Sule Skerry, Muckle Flugga and Cape Wrath. Of life in two such towers I can tell the reader something, for it was my fortune some years since to spend a week upon the Eddystone, and later on a fortnight on the Inchcape, better known as the Bell Rock. In each case permission was accorded for a special reason, and the privilege is one not easily obtained.

A common but mistaken notion with regard to lighthouse-keepers is that many of them have been sailors. This is quite true about the crews of light-vessels moored around the coast; but sailors would be thrown away upon a lighthouse, for its keepers have no seaman's work to do. They are not even required to manage a boat, which is rarely, if ever, attached to a rock station; and upon their journeys to

and from the lighthouse they are passengers and nothing more. It might be rash to say that there is not a sailor in the lighthouse service; but the great majority are landsmen. One of my lighthouse friends was formerly in a marine-store dealer's shop. Another had been a power-loom " tuner "; which, it may be explained to those whose knowledge of tuners is confined to the gentlemen who visit our pianos, is a man employed in weaving-mills to keep in good repair a set of looms. Lighthouse authorities prefer such men as have a knowledge of some handicraft—carpentry, painting, or the like—and are thus competent to execute small jobs within their sea-girt home.

Again, while it is common knowledge that rock keepers spend a portion of their time on shore, it is believed that this is all holiday. Such is not usually the case—at least in theory. A keeper's spell on shore is passed in working in the Trinity depot of the port at which he lives. There he is either set to clerk's work in the office or employed in painting or repairing buoys. All keepers have, however, a fortnight's real holiday each year.

This arrangement of reliefs does not apply to all lighthouses, the staff of the Eddystone being treated on different lines. As the nearest Trinity depot is situated at Penzance, some sixty miles and more away by sea, it would be inconvenient to " relieve " it—that is, change the keepers—from that place. The keepers therefore live in Plymouth, and are taken to and from their rock, not as usual by a Trinity steamer, but by a Plymouth tug. At Plymouth there is no employment for them, and their only duty when ashore is to report daily at the tug-owner's office in case the superintendent at Penzance wishes to send them to replace a disabled or holiday-taking keeper at some other lighthouse. It is the same in many parts of Scotland, where lighthouses are often at a great distance from the nearest depot.

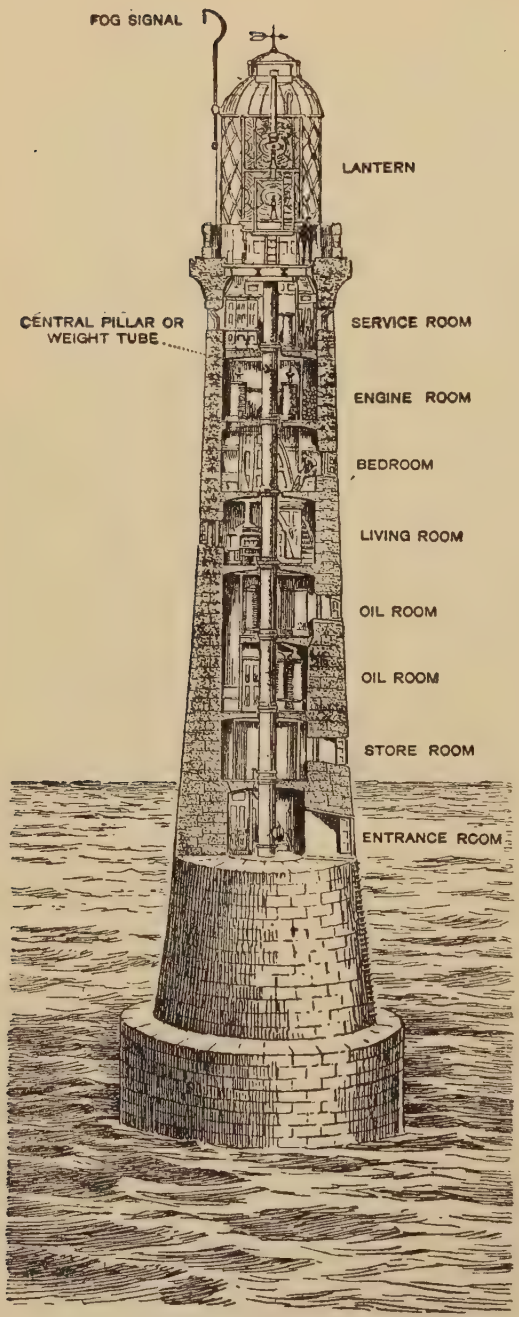
Keepers regard the Eddystone as a " good " station, not only for this reason, but because Plymouth offers to their wives shops, trams, amusements, and the chance of making friends. " Bad " in this sense is the South Bishop lighthouse, on a little island off the coast of Pembrokeshire, for its keepers live at Neyland, a small country place.

Moreover, the sea round the Eddystone is much resorted to by fish—bass, pollack, mackerel—and, as a consequence, by fishermen, who in calm weather sometimes land upon the reef. This gives an opportunity of sending letters to and from the shore, without awaiting the relief.

In England this relief is made each month. Of the four keepers forming the staff of a rock lighthouse, one—each man in turn—is always upon shore, being known for the time being as the " shore " keeper. Each month the man on shore is taken to the rock, another being relieved.

This system would not work correctly without special arrangement. Each keeper spends two months in the lighthouse, followed by a month on shore. Supposing the head or " principal " keeper, whom we will call A, to take his spell ashore in January, and to be succeeded in February by B; then it is clear that the remaining keepers, C and D, will both be due to go ashore in March.

And both *do* go ashore, being replaced not only by keeper B, but by a young " super ", or supernumerary, who has recently entered the service. This he does between the ages of nineteen and twenty-eight; but he is not at once appointed to a settled post, being sent to various lighthouses to act as temporary keeper in such cases as described above, or to replace an invalid keeper or one taking holiday. This



Bishop Tower (Scilly Isles) in sections down to entrance room, below which is the water-tank.

system is economical, as it obviates the necessity of keeping a fifth man at each rock lighthouse. It also gives the super a variety of experience, and adapts him to obey and work with many different men.

After a year or two he will receive a post as junior keeper; probably upon a rock, and very likely on a "bad" one from a keeper's point of view. Every few years he is moved on, passing now to a mainland, now again to a rock station; is promoted to be third, and later second keeper; and, always supposing that his conduct and ability are good, becomes in course of time a principal.

In Scotland the system is different. The relief is made fortnightly, each man being six weeks on his lighthouse and a fortnight upon shore. This is "good business" for the service, keepers being on active work nine months a year instead of eight; while they prefer it, for they go ashore six times a year instead of only four—though for a shorter time. There is no need for supers, each man's turn coming round in due order. To replace absent men an "occasional" keeper is attached to each rock light. This man, while still following his ordinary work as fisherman, boatman, or the like, is guaranteed employment twenty days a year; and in return he holds himself in readiness to serve when needed.

Another difference is concerned with food. Every rock keeper has, besides his salary, a food allowance for each day that he is actually on the lighthouse. In England he receives the cash, and spends it as he likes.

This gives the men entire freedom, but the system has a drawback; a man with a large family and kindly heart may stint himself of food that he may have more money to bestow at home. The Scottish method does away with this defect; the same amount of money is laid out on the men's food; but it is paid, not to them-

selves but to contractors who supply such staple articles as bread, beef, bacon, and potatoes—also ale. A few pence of the daily allowance are laid out according to the keepers' tastes; if they choose fruit or eggs or other little dainties they will get them, but they cannot touch the cash.

The food, of course, is taken out at each relief. Meat will be eaten fresh for a few days, and the remainder salted down. Upon the Eddystone the men take flour and yeast, and have a " baking " every day or two. On the Bell Rock a fortnight's bread supply is brought from shore, and under careful management keeps fairly fresh until the next relief. Porridge, although a Scottish dish, is never eaten there.

To guard against all danger of starvation when relief is long delayed, a store of flour, biscuits, and tinned meat is kept in every lighthouse, in case of need.

Lastly, there is a difference in the length of watches kept. The English lighthouse watch, like that at sea, is four hours long. " First watch " begins at 8 p.m. and lasts till midnight, at which hour its keeper goes to bed till eight next morning, when he rises to get breakfast for his two companions, who have kept respectively the " middle watch " from midnight until four, and " morning watch " from four to eight. By the insertion of the afternoon " dog watches " of two hours each, no man is on the same watch two nights in succession.

The English keepers like this system, and there is one obvious reason why they should. A four-hour watch seems long, especially the hated middle watch; but each third night the men enjoy a " long night in "—eight hours of unbroken rest. It is not so with Scottish keepers, for with them three-hour watches are the rule; and the man who goes on duty at 9 p.m. and to bed at midnight is called up again at six—at any rate in winter when the sun declines to rise till eight or nine o'clock.

Once safely landed on the ledge or " set-off " at the base of the Eddystone we climb by gun-metal ladder rungs to the heavy entrance doors—also of gun-metal; thence, mounting by a winding stair, we reach the lower and the upper oil-stores. Above these is a storeroom; over that again the crane-room, with a crane for hoisting heavy goods. Next comes the little kitchen living-room, with three small windows deep-set in its walls. The roof is vaulted, and the walls are of unpainted stone; the absence of needless paint lessens risk from fire.

Above the kitchen is the " low light " room, which, besides serving as an apartment for an engineer or other official visiting the tower, contains at night two lamps, whose beams shine on the four-miles-distant Hand Deep rocks, a reef which, although covered even at low tide, is dangerous to a vessel of deep draught. Still higher is the keepers' bedroom, with its bunks ranged round the walls; another climb will bring us to the service-room, in which are placed the oil-containers with pipes connecting them with the twin lamps in the lantern immediately above.

It may be asked why electricity is not applied to rock lighthouses, although used in many on the shore. I believe that it is still a debated point with lighthouse experts as to which is the more powerful illuminant; some maintaining that fog is better penetrated by the light of oil. But, this apart, the installation of electric plant in a rock lighthouse would be a costly and difficult matter, besides involving the presence of a staff of electricians in addition to the keepers, with considerable vibration to the tower itself. The alternative of laying an electric cable from the shore also presents difficulties. So far, all British rock lights

still use oil as their illuminant. Most lighthouse lamps are wickless; the oil is forced by compressed air through a heated vaporizer and the resulting vapour burns in an incandescent mantle like that used with gas.

The keeper's nightly vigil opens with the sunset lighting of the lamp or lamps. The lamp once lit, he may step out from time to time upon the balcony outside the lantern, or go down to the service-room for a few minutes' pumping when the pressure of air is getting low, and to the bedroom to arouse the man on duty for the following watch; but otherwise he does not leave the lantern for a moment of the four long hours. The lamps themselves require small attention, save a little regulation for the first half-hour after being lit; and the chief break in the long vigil is the winding of the mechanism that revolves the " lens ", as the great drum of glass and metal that surrounds the lamp is called.

The lens is turned by clockwork, actuated by a heavy weight. This is the explanation of a fact we may have noted in our upward climb; the presence in each room of the tower of a central pillar or shaft, rather larger in the lower chambers than in those above. The upper portion of this shaft contains a chain, while in the lower is a weight of half a ton, which, slowly falling, turns the lens.

The weight requires winding up each hour, notice being given to the keeper by a warning gong; five hundred revolutions of a handle are required, and the job employs him for ten minutes. Meanwhile, the lens is kept in motion by a supplementary piece of mechanism which he first sets to work.

" Why should the lens revolve?" it may be asked. Because a plain unvarying light would be of comparatively little use; warning a seaman of a danger, it would give him no idea of where he was. The lights of lighthouses are made to vary, no two lights within some fifty miles or more of one another being quite the same.

By the arrangement of bull's-eyes and prisms in the lens the power of the light is greatly increased, the rays being brought together in one mighty beam. And, further, this beam shines across the sea in fullest power only through a certain portion or portions of the lens, the intervals giving either total darkness or a comparatively feeble glimmer. By so arranging the bull's-eyes and prisms of the lens that the light shall be at its brightest at certain stated intervals, an almost infinite variety of " flashing " and " group-flashing " lights can be produced in different lighthouses.

The lenses in most lighthouses revolve on several pairs of small steel rollers, running on a bed of steel. A modern innovation is a trough of mercury in which the lens floats round without the least vibration.

The Eddystone lens revolves once in three minutes. A bright flash of one and a half seconds is followed by five seconds of darkness; then comes another flash, followed by twenty seconds of eclipse. No seaman can mistake this for the light upon Start Point, where a flash which lasts one second is succeeded by nineteen seconds of eclipse.

The keeper must not read, for reading sometimes leads to sleep!

If he *should* fall asleep, or through forgetfulness omit the winding of the weight, and thus allow the lens to stand, he must report the matter in the " log ", in which is also noted the weather, temperature, and rise or fall of the barometer in every watch. It will avail him little to omit the record of his sin; some passing vessel's captain will have noticed that the lens is standing and proclaim the fact on reaching port. But such an incident is very rare.

The four long hours end at last. Down

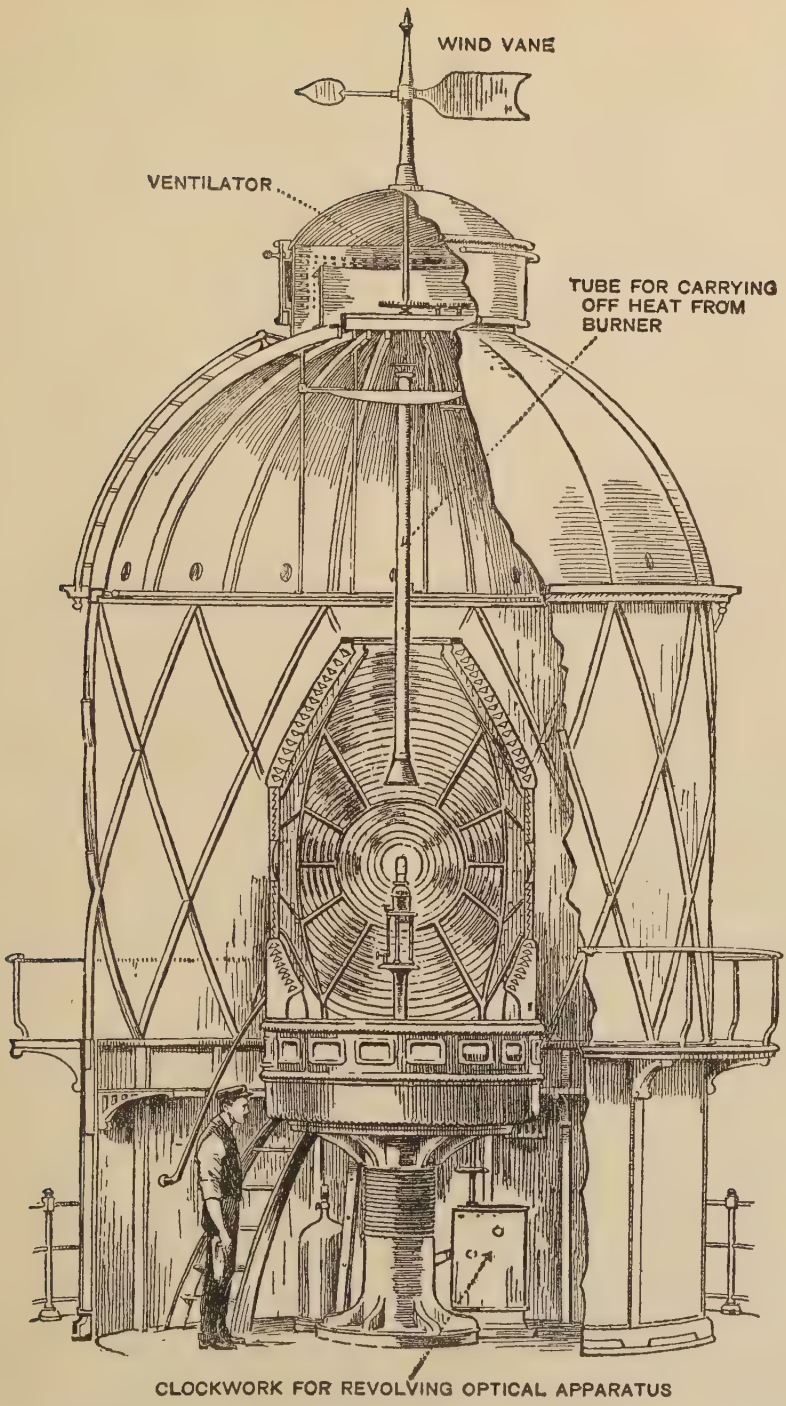


Diagram of a Modern Lantern, showing optical apparatus in section

goes the keeper to the bedroom, shakes his comrade by the shoulder; down perhaps to the kitchen, where he stirs the embers of the fire, puts the kettle on, in order that the man now going on duty may enjoy a cup of tea or cocoa. Finally to bed.

The morning passes in a round of various occupations—cleaning of the house and light, refilling of the oil-containers, preparation of the midday meal. The principal is head of the establishment, but there is little obvious difference in rank; all work together in a friendly way. The principal, however, does no cooking; that is the duty of the junior keepers, working in alternate weeks; or, if there is a " super " on the rock, he acts as cook.

The Eddystone affords small scope for exercise except upon the balcony around the lantern and upon the set-off at the base. The reef on which the lighthouse stands, though never quite submerged, is rugged and uneven. Upon one jutting rock still stands the base of the old tower built by Smeaton, of which the upper part, containing living-rooms and lantern, has been placed on Plymouth Hoe.

The set-off forms a limited but pleasant promenade, save in rough weather, when it is swept every instant by the sea. In summer we may sit with back against the tower and look out towards Plymouth breakwater—and home! Or, when the tide is high and dusk is falling, it is good to fish for pollack, which abound about the reef and give good sport.

The Bell Rock is a smaller and less lofty tower than the present Eddystone, containing fewer rooms. In all material matters, save for a few improvements, it stands now precisely as when built by Stevenson in 1811. There is an oil-store and workshop, kitchen, keepers' bedroom with " box-beds ", " library ", and lantern.

This library is the great feature of the tower to a visitor. It is a beautiful apartment, with domed, hand-painted ceiling, three ample windows, marble bust of Stevenson, and tablet to his memory.

Moreover, it is full of antique curiosities. The great oak table stands on legs the feet of which are dolphins' heads; there is a lighthouse carved upon the back of each oak chair; while on the table and in cupboards are such things as ancient inkstands, flint and tinder lighters, and the silken lighthouse flag. In this delightful room a bed was made for me upon the floor—as had been done for R. M. Ballantyne some forty years previously.

The tower has other relics of old days. Up in the lantern the brass clock is of the same age as the lighthouse; in the kitchen Georgian silver spoons appear upon the dinner-table, and the sugar lives in a quaint oaken keg.

But modern appliances for utility and comfort are there too. Electric bells connect the lantern with the kitchen and the bedroom, so that assistance can be summoned promptly if required. The laborious hoisting of oil-tins from the steamer when it brings the annual supply is avoided by the use of a double-action pump. Connected with this pump is a long pipe, one end of which is in the lantern, while the lower end is at the tower's base. On the arrival of the steamer a large open tank is brought ashore, and into this the oil-tins are emptied. A hose is attached to the lower end of the fixed pipe, and connected with the tank. The working of the pump draws up the oil, and in this way the large brass cisterns in the store are filled. The simple turning of a tap closes the lower section of the pipe and opens that connected with the oil-containers in the lantern; half a dozen strokes of the handle force up a day's supply of oil.

A great advantage enjoyed by the keepers

of the Bell Rock is the fact that, except during neap tides, the reef is bare for a few hours daily and allows them ample space for exercise. Each jutting point and ledge, each winding channel by which boats may reach the landing-places, has its special name, recalling the old legend of the rock, or else those workmen and officials who assisted at the building of the tower. Sir Ralph the Rover's Ledge, The Abbot's Ledge, George the Third's, Gray's Rock, and Haldane's Ledge are some of these. On " The Last Hope " the engineer and a small band of workmen were in dire peril of being drowned; Port Stevenson is a delightful pool in which I often bathed. But at flood-tide all these are covered, and twelve feet of water swirls around the tower.

At noon upon a sunny day a mirror is set up upon the balcony, and a brief message heliographed to the shore station at Arbroath. That is the men's head-quarters, and their homes are in the town; but to reach the lighthouse they travel by train to Edinburgh and embark at Granton on the steamer *May*. She has a busy day each fortnight; going first to Fidra and the Bass Rock; thence to the May Island, finally to the North Carr Light-vessel and the old Bell Rock Tower.

Pleasant enough is life on a rock lighthouse in fine summer weather, with clear skies and a smooth sea. Far different is it during winter or in time of gales. Throughout December in the north of Scotland, for example, lights must be kept burning for some seventeen hours out of twenty-four. For days together keepers often have to shout to hear each other, even when sitting round the kitchen table, so tremendous is the howling of the wind, the crash of seas against the tower. The keepers of Eddystone can sometimes hear the grinding of great boulders as a rough sea rolls them to and fro upon the ocean bed.

Then there is fog, which sometimes settles down upon the sea for many hours —even days—without a break. May Island, the Bass Rock, and many other lighthouses are furnished with a warning fog-horn. On the Eddystone and the Bell Rock large bells were formerly in use; but in both cases these have been replaced by powerful explosive signals, fired at five-minute intervals.

The signal, consisting of a tonite cartridge, is attached to a line suspended from a jib fixed just outside the lantern door. This jib works on a pivot, and, when the cartridge is attached, is swung up well above the lantern; otherwise the shock of the explosion would be liable to break the glass. The cartridge is exploded by a small electric battery inside the lantern door.

The attaching and firing of the signals requires the whole attention of one man; and when, as has been known, a fog continues for two days and nights without a break, it means that none of the three keepers gets much rest.

As a set-off to this extra work fog brings extra pay—so much to each man for every hour of fog. In England extra money earned in this way is called " fog-dust " or " noise-money " by the men.

Fishing, sometimes a little card-playing, carpentry—these are among the light-keeper's amusements; but above all he welcomes newspapers and books. Especially such " nature " articles as may be found in papers like the *Field* and *Country Life* are read with pleasure, for the men themselves are keen observers of the bird-life to be seen around their towers. So books and papers posted to the nearest depot for a lighthouse earn their senders a warm place in keepers' hearts.

The Spectral Gorilla

By R. de M. Rudolf

"What is the matter with old Shep?" asked Frank Gower of his friend Walter Adams, as they washed off the dust of their journey.

The two had arrived at the house of Mr. Shepherdson, an old form-master, who had invited them to come and stay with him.

"He seemed a bit jumpy, I thought," remarked Walter; "do you suppose he had forgotten he had asked us?"

"Hardly that, because he sent the car to meet us at the station."

"What an extraordinary collection of things in the hall," resumed Walter, "the place is like a museum. I suppose they were collected by the old fellow who left him the property."

Having finished their preparations, together they descended to the drawing-room, where tea was waiting for them.

During the meal they had leisure to observe their old friend, and were concerned to notice how his hands shook, and how more than once he lost the thread of the conversation, and recalled himself with a very obvious start.

"You have a nice place here, Mr. Shepherdson," Frank remarked, "and lots of interesting things."

"Yes," replied their host, "the place is nice enough. My old cousin, from whom I inherited the property, collected all kinds of curiosities."

"You have a valuable collection of pictures," observed Walter. "I think I noticed a Rubens and a Murillo."

Mr. Shepherdson smiled and shook his head.

"I am afraid that my cousin did not know much about pictures. I doubt if they are genuine in spite of their labels."

"I suppose you will get rid of them, then?"

"I cannot do that. By the conditions of the will, I have to make this my home and maintain his collection."

"Not a very great hardship," laughed Walter. "I wish I had a cousin to do the same for me!"

"He was an eccentric man," resumed Mr. Shepherdson. "He made his money in Australia, came home and built this bungalow, and then filled it with all kinds of strange things without rhyme or reason. Still, I am much obliged to him; living here is pleasanter than being a poor schoolmaster all my life. You can imagine how glad I was when I heard he had left his property to me."

"Were you not expecting it?"

"No, for I hardly knew him. I believe there was a nephew who really ought to have had it, but I do not know anything of him. I suppose he disgraced himself in some way."

"Well, it is awfully kind of you to invite us. We have brought our fishing kit as you suggested."

Mr. Shepherdson seemed about to say something, but checked himself and fell into a brown study, absently drumming his fingers on the table.

The two young men felt slightly uncomfortable and exchanged glances. They were relieved when the man-servant entered to clear away the tea things.

"You will dine at seven o'clock, I suppose, sir?"

"I beg your pardon, Stevens," said Mr. Shepherdson, waking up. "Dine? Seven o'clock? Certainly."

When the man left the room Mr. Shepherdson proposed a walk round the grounds, and his two guests accordingly accompanied him; but it was not until they reached the summer-house, overlooking the river running through the estate, that their host began to talk.

"I am afraid you must have thought me rather a dull old fellow," he said. "I have been trying to make up my mind whether I ought to tell you something. I think I had better make a clean breast of it.

"When I wrote to you," he went on, "I had no reason to suppose you would not enjoy yourselves here; but something has happened since. Does either of you believe in ghosts?"

"Not one little bit," answered Frank.

"I should like to see one, though," added Walter.

"Did you happen to notice a stuffed gorilla in the hall?" questioned their host.

"I did," answered Walter, "rather a mangy-looking old beast."

"What would you say if I told you the spirit of that beast haunts the house?"

The two friends looked at each other with some apprehension. Surely old Shep had taken leave of his senses.

"No," said Mr. Shepherdson, answering their look, "I am still sane, but I am a little doubtful whether it is fair to subject you two fellows to a remarkably uncanny experience. Twice lately I have seen the brute moving about, and so have the servants. In fact, not a single servant will stay in the house at night. I do not want you to be made uncomfortable, and I can easily get you beds at the inn."

His two guests protested in chorus. Nothing would induce them to miss the chance of investigating a real apparition.

"Very well," said Mr. Shepherdson, "I am glad I have told you, though nothing may happen while you are here, and I hope it will not."

After dinner, when the servants had left, the two friends accompanied their host round the house, testing bolts and bars, and then spent some time examining the many curiosities the hall contained. There were suits of armour, cases of butterflies, cabinets of china, collections of weapons, and dozens of other objects in the central hall from which the living rooms opened out.

Above ran a gallery, containing antique furniture, and giving access to the bedrooms.

About eleven o'clock they separated for the night. When Frank and Walter found themselves alone, they began to talk over the situation.

They were sharing a large room containing a bed at either end, with three windows opening on to a balcony.

"I think I shall lock the door," said Walter significantly. "I'm not thinking of the ghost. I'm thinking of old Shep. I believe he is as mad as a hatter, and there is no one else in the house."

"You don't believe in the ghost story, then?" questioned Frank.

"Of course not," was the reply. "I prodded that old gorilla with my penknife; it is as dusty and fusty as possible. To associate it with a ghost is too silly."

Hardly had Walter got into bed when he heard a startled cry from Frank.

"Look at the window!"

"Look at the window!"

He turned his gaze quickly in that direction, and was just in time to catch sight in the moonlight of a weird crouching figure gliding swiftly past. The next moment both had jumped from their beds and darted to the balcony. But whatever it was, the thing had disappeared.

Walter gave a low whistle.

"I say," he said, "this is uncommonly interesting. I think we had better sit up a little and see what else is going to happen."

Frank readily agreed. To go to sleep with something prowling about the house did not commend itself to either.

For a long time they sat, silently watching the windows. Then both distinctly heard the sound of padded feet passing along the gallery inside the house.

Neither felt inclined to open the door.

"I believe it is old Shep sleep-walking," whispered Frank, "if so, we must not wake him suddenly."

Walter agreed, but neither cared to get into bed until the dawn began to show; then both slept heavily, and were awakened only by Stevens knocking vigorously at the door.

Rather to their surprise they found their host in excellent spirits at the breakfast-table.

"I have had a splendid night," he told them. "I haven't slept so well for a long time. I think it was the knowledge of you two being here. Sleeping alone in the house is rather trying to the nerves at present."

"Why don't you go away and take a holiday?" suggested Frank.

"I don't think that would help matters.

Whatever it is that haunts the house, I should probably find here when I came back."

"Why not live somewhere else?"

"That I will not do!" exclaimed their host with some warmth. "I explained to you that living here is one of the conditions under which I inherit the property. I will not give it up for man or demon!"

The two friends changed the subject. Both were convinced their old master was suffering under a delusion; they wanted to help him if they could, and had resolved to stay until some solution occurred to them.

While fishing that day, they took the opportunity of Mr. Shepherdson being down stream to discuss the matter.

"Look here, Frank," said Walter, "suppose we all sit up to-night. If Shep agrees I will bet that nothing happens."

"Suppose he does not agree, what then?"

"Then we shall know that it is Shep himself who wanders about."

"But," objected Frank, "the thing we saw pass the window wasn't anything like Shep."

"I am not so sure. The light was not good, and we saw the thing for a moment only. Soon after, we heard steps inside. No stranger could have got in, because we know the place was locked up."

As Frank had nothing better to propose, they agreed to act on Walter's suggestion, and at dinner mentioned the matter to Mr. Shepherdson.

Their old master welcomed the proposal with a readiness that rather surprised them.

"It is a capital idea," he said. "I must confess I would not sit up by myself. My nerves are not so good as they were; but with two strong young fellows like you I shall be ready to face anything. There is a difficulty, however. The electric light is turned off at midnight."

"Who turns it off?" asked Walter.

"I really don't know. It may be the company, but, as it has occurred only lately, I have put it down as part of the persecution I am enduring."

"Well, we must have candles, and light them just before twelve," said Walter.

"Yes, we can do that," assented their host. "Stevens," he added, turning to the servant, "collect all the candlesticks you can, and put candles in them. Bring them to the billiard-room before you go."

"Very good, sir," said the man.

The evening passed pleasantly. The prospect of encountering—or at least baffling—the unknown intruder seemed to raise the spirits of Mr. Shepherdson, and it was with many jokes that they proceeded to distribute the candles about the hall, and light them at a quarter to twelve, as arranged.

"I think I shall arm myself with a war club," said Frank. "This looks pretty blood-thirsty."

The others laughingly followed his example, and then sat down on an old oak settle at the foot of the staircase leading to the gallery.

They had not long to wait. Hardly had the clock struck twelve when the electric light went out, leaving a curious impression of gloom in spite of the candles.

"Here beginneth the first chapter!" quoth Frank.

No one made any further remark. Somehow, the thrill of expectancy, and the weird shadows cast by the candles, indisposed them to conversation.

"Hullo!" exclaimed Frank, starting up after a few minutes silence; "one of the candles has gone out. I'm sure I put one on that old mummy case."

The others gazed in the direction, when suddenly Walter said excitedly: "There is another gone out!"

With straining eyes, and listening for the

slightest sound, they watched the remaining lights.

They had lighted about a dozen candles, and, with beating hearts, stared fascinated as one by one candle after candle went out, without the slightest sign of anyone being near.

As the last candle was extinguished, a low demoniacal laugh was heard from the gallery. They turned their eyes in the direction of the sound, and, as they became accustomed to the darkness, saw with horror a huge ungainly figure perched on the balcony. It glared at them with a pair of monstrous eyes, that seemed to burn in the creature's hideous head.

Walter was the first to recover his self-possession.

" Come along!" he shouted. " Ghost or devil, let us tackle it!"

Grasping the weapons, they stumbled up the staircase, and gained the gallery. It was difficult in the dark to make their way among the various objects the gallery contained, but they continued until they had explored it thoroughly, without finding any trace of their unwelcome visitor.

Suddenly from the floor of the hall came a fiendish laugh!

" I cannot stand this any more," gasped Mr. Shepherdson in a weak voice. He staggered, and would have fallen but for Frank's arm.

" It is of no use," said Walter, " let us get him into his room. We can do nothing without a light."

Supporting their host, they groped their way to his room, and fortunately soon found a candle. They locked the door, made Mr. Shepherdson lie down, and, discovering some brandy in a flask, gave him some.

" I must give it up," wailed their host. " Heaven is against me. I will leave this accursed place to-morrow, and never see it again."

" Don't give up, sir," said Walter, " we will find some way out of this business; you will be all right to-morrow."

His old master made no reply, and a long silence ensued.

From time to time Walter thought he heard sounds outside the room, and once there was a scratching at the door. He glanced at his friends, but they apparently heard nothing. Mr. Shepherdson was dosing uneasily, and Frank, who was sitting in an arm-chair by the bedside, had fallen asleep, worn out by the day's excitement, and want of sleep the preceding night.

Walter on his part felt no inclination to sleep. He sat still, unwilling to disturb his companions, until he could sit still no longer. He removed his shoes, and made his way softly to the door, taking his war club with him. Gently he opened it and peered out. A stream of moonlight flooded the hall from the glass roof, and everything seemed still and quiet. He went out, closing the door behind him, and began to traverse the gallery. He had not gone far when he was brought to a standstill by a sight that made every nerve tingle.

On a sofa against the wall lay the hideous hairy figure, apparently asleep!

In a moment Walter bounded forward with upraised club, but in doing so struck against a table that grated on the floor with a harsh sound.

With a startled yell the brute leaped from the sofa, and fled with incredible swiftness, with Walter in hot pursuit.

They raced round the gallery, then the creature with wonderful agility sprang over, and by the aid of one of the supporting pillars reached the ground, disappearing into the shadows below.

Walter's blood was up. The fact that the monster had fled before him had given him confidence. He raced down the stairs, and, regardless of risk, pursued his quarry into the darkness.

He peered and poked about for some time with no result, and was on the point of giving up the search, when suddenly he stumbled and fell heavily on something hairy and alive. Instinctively he grappled desperately with his adversary, clutching him by the throat. The next moment his grasp relaxed, for in an unmistakably human voice came a cry from the creature under him.

"Stop! Stop! I give in!"

"Who are you?" gasped Walter.

And then in a sudden access of anger he seized his victim, and dragged him into a patch of moonlight on the floor.

"Take off that mask!" he ordered.

With fumbling hands his captive removed the hideous monkey head, and Walter gazed in amazement at a pallid face glistening with perspiration.

It was the man-servant Stevens!

"You scoundrel," ejaculated Walter. "I have a good mind to break every bone in your body."

"I don't care if you do," muttered the other sullenly. "You have spoilt my game and can end it if you like."

"What do you mean by playing these devil's tricks?" demanded Walter. "Make a clean breast of it, or it will be the worse for you."

"Oh, it is simple enough!" said the man bitterly. "This house is mine by rights. It was my uncle's, and I am his next-of-kin."

"You!" ejaculated Walter. "You are Mr. Shepherdson's servant."

"Take off that mask!"

"Yes, I descended to that, I was desperate. Over and over again my uncle told me I was to be his heir, and then left me without a penny."

"But what is the good of your annoying Mr. Shepherdson?"

"Don't you see, I wished to scare him away from the place; then it would have been mine."

"What a fool you have been," commented Walter. "If you had had the sense to go to Mr. Shepherdson and tell him your story, I am sure he would have helped you; but he won't now. Here, get up! I'm going to lock you in a room."

"I can't walk. I have twisted my ankle jumping down from that gallery, or you wouldn't have caught me so easily."

"Come along, I will help you." And Walter lifted him and carried him to the study, where he placed him on a couch.

"Now I shall lock the door," said Walter. "I am going to get an hour or two's sleep, and I should advise you to do the same. By the by, what did you do to those candles to make them go out?"

"I just cut them through and stuck them together again. It was quite successful."

"Quite," thought Walter, as he locked the door on his prisoner and pocketed the key.

Now he had leisure to think he was surprised that the others had heard nothing of his encounter.

He went to the door of the room where they were and listened. In a short time he was satisfied that both were sleeping heavily, and it was not long before he followed their example.

In the morning he unfolded his tale, to the amazement and anger of his listeners.

Mr. Shepherdson, whose nerves had been sorely tried, was furious with the rascal Stevens, and vowed to punish him with the utmost rigour of the law.

Gradually, however, as they discussed the matter, milder counsels prevailed. For one thing Mr. Shepherdson preferred to avoid the publicity of the law courts, nor could he help admitting that the bitter disappointment of the disinherited man made his conduct less black than it might otherwise have been.

To make a long story short, Stevens was packed off to Australia, where he had relations, and gave no more trouble. Walter and Frank thoroughly enjoyed the rest of their stay, and, indeed, spent many another holiday with their old master.

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